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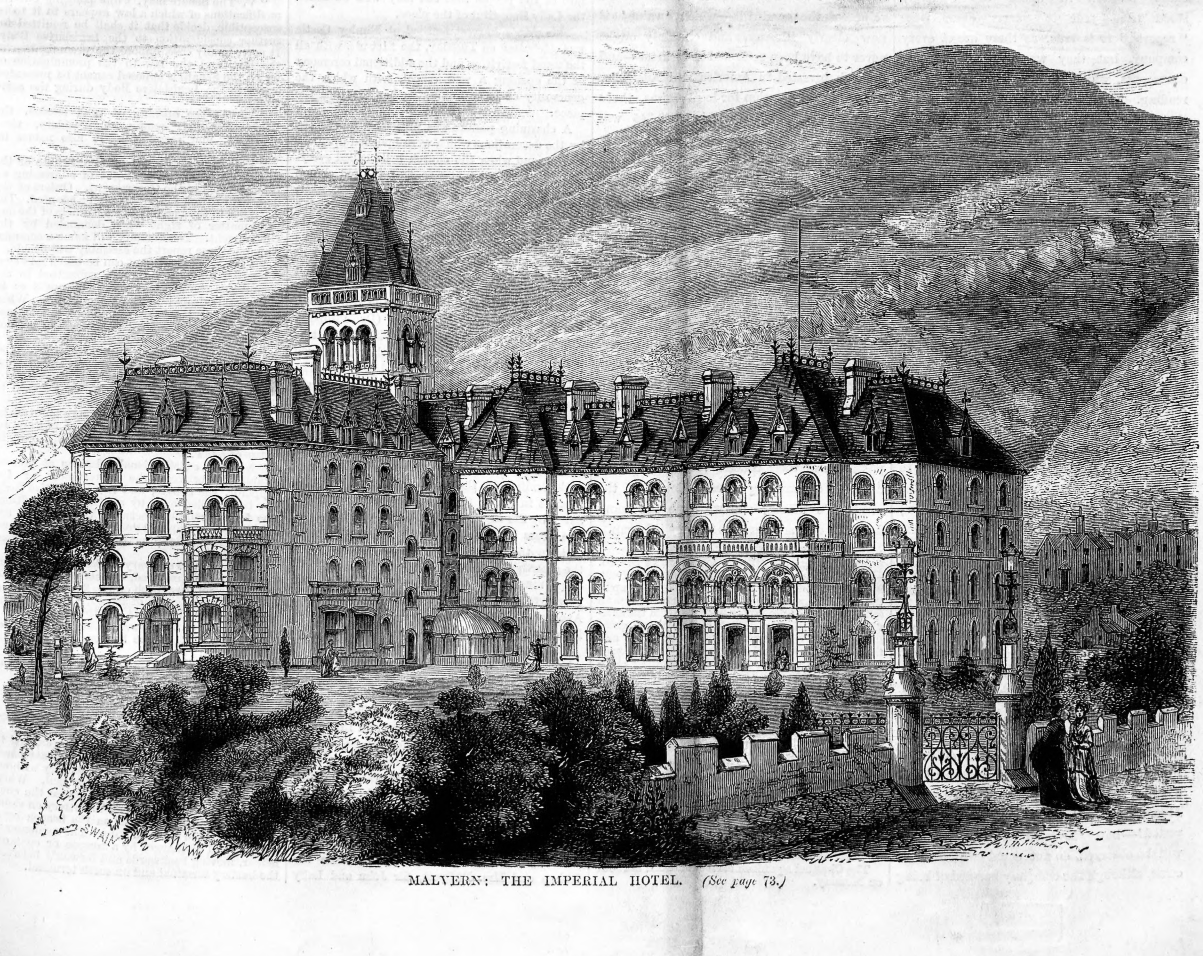
"ASSURANCE."

Until very recently, Assurance Companies were accounted amongst the best means of investment. To use a colloquialism, they were deemed "as safe as the Bank of England." All through the recent panic they remained firm, while older and younger financial establishments tottered and fell.

Men strive harder and with more cheerfulness to pay their assurance premiums than anything else, urged on to do so by the fact that should the assurance lapse by reason of the nonpayment of the premium, the deposits of years are lost. No wonder, then, that when one of these corporations fails to meet its liabilities, there is dismay amongst the policy-holders and depositors, and a fierce outcry from all classes. Such a state of things exists at the present moment—the result of the failure, first of the Albert, then of the European Assurance Company. These are national calamities; they are of imperial magnitude, and command the attention of the kingdom. Especially, we regret to find, does the last as well as the penultimate crash concern the Midland District. Birmingham, Cheltenham, Worcester, Kidderminster, Dudley—these and other towns have reason to lament the mistaken policy which led them to invest in the companies named. Some of the best men in the Midlands are unfortunately, or have been, associated with the management of both the Albert and the European: the directors of the former included even local legislators.

Leaving for the present the broken-down Albert Office, let us glance for a moment at the European Life Assurance and Guarantee Association. In 1853 this company came into existence under the title of the Industrial and General Life Assurance and Deposit Company. It was not only a Life Assurance Company, but a description of Savings Bank, in which money deposited might be withdrawn without the policy becoming forfeited. Whether the company was unsuccessful at first, or had an ambition beyond other associations, we will not now stop to enquire; it is sufficient to say that it amalgamated office after office until at least thirty-six associations were united under the banner which the European so proudly hung out. These offices are stated by the *Birmingham Daily Post*—which, to the credit of journalism be it said, ruthlessly exposed the whole affair—to be as follows:—The British Nation, Accumulative, Anglo-Australian, Diadem, British Provident, Catholic Law, Phœnix, British Commercial, British and Cambrian, General Indemnity, Life Assurance Treasury, Bank of Deposit, Waterloo, Commercial, English Widows', British Shield, Tontine, United Provident, Age, Engineers', Householders', Magnet, Wellington, London Equitable, Mercantile Union, Royal Naval and Military, United Guarantee, Industrial, People's Provident, Prince of Wales, Athenæum, United Mutual Mining, United Service, India and London, Professional, and General Accident.

The directors were men in whom the shareholders appear to have had and to have placed



MALVERN: THE IMPERIAL HOTEL. *(See page 73.)*

every confidence. Even Royalty, if the prospectus is to be believed, had sufficient faith in the *boná-fides* of the European to permit their names to be used in connection with one of its branches—the Royal, Naval, Military, and East India Life Department. This full-sounding, resonant title, it appears, was so attractive that the Queen, the Dukes of Cambridge and Richmond, Field-Marshal Sir John Burgoyne, Earl Grey, Sir Stafford Northcote, and others, accorded the branch their patronage! In the year 1864 there were three Members of Parliament on the directorate of the European, viz., the Chairman, Mr. H. Wickham Wickham, Member for Bradford; Mr. Charles Forster, Member for Walsall; and Mr. J. P. Brown-Westhead, Member for York. After the amalgamation of the European and the British Nation Companies, some of the directors retired, and now the directorate is composed of the following gentlemen:—Chairman, General Sir Frederic Smith, K.H., F.R.S.; Lord George Gordon Lennox, M.P.; Admiral Sir George Lambert, G.C.B.; Admiral Michael Quin; George F. Anderson, Esq.; Edward Hamilton Anson, Esq.; R. Crawford, Esq.; Henry Deffell, Esq.; Robert Norton, Esq., M.D.; George Bermingham, Esq.; James Furnell, Esq. Secretary, Dalton Easum, Esq.; general manager, Henry Lake, Esq.; auditor, John Parker, Esq. In what particular way these gentlemen assisted the European Company we have yet to learn; probably the examination of the general manager, Mr. Lake (who, by the way, has written to the papers denying that there is any necessity for winding up the company), will throw some light upon the gloom which now hangs over the company's affairs.

Whatever the respectability of the Board of Directors might have been, thus much is certain: the officials of the European were to blame in not publishing such explanatory statements as would have shown the exact position in which the company stood from year to year. There were "reports," it is true, as there are of every company, but they were vague, shadowy documents, which no one was the wiser for reading. The last published report stated that although the company's business in the United States had been discontinued (why, was not mentioned), "the amount of new business has not only been maintained, but a small increase has been made." The exact amount of this increase it appears was £405. 0s. 11d; not a very large addition to the company's income for one year, especially when it is remembered that thirty-eight offices had sent their business to the books of the European, and that Royalty was among its patrons. In the year ending 31st December, 1868, (we quote from the report) the gross amount received in premiums was £338,298. 11s. 10d. "The life and guarantee claims paid during the year were, including bonus additions, £257,147. 14s. 7d." The fire-insurance business was discontinued in the previous year, as we conceive, and the claims referred to (chiefly for life policies) were rather singularly £39,861. 5s. 6d. in excess of the year ending December, 1867. Fortunately for the claimants, the company was able to pay its way last year, though the death-rattle must even then have been in its throat. Yet it had a princely revenue from all sources of upwards of £300,000 a year. Of the Company's liabilities, however, nothing is said. According to the *Post*, and "Bentley's Tables," the last statement with regard to the European was that the annual income was £368,000. Funds invested, £755,100. Sums assured and bonuses, £11,276,600. Sum in hand for each £100. assured, £6. 13s. 11d. The 'funds invested'—how 'invested' we shall see—it will be observed, do not equal two years' income, although the company boasted of being in existence since 1819—a statement of the accuracy of which our readers may judge from what has been said of the history of the undertaking. The sum of £755,000. invested includes the paid-up capital, which should of course be independent of the assurance fund. The premiums ought to be sufficient to meet the claims of the society, or else, of course, it would be manifestly a losing concern. The proprietors' fund amounts to £182,754. 12s. 6d. This, as a rule, would represent cash paid upon shares; but it may, to some extent at least, represent the amount of paid-up shares issued to persons connected with or interested in the various amalgamations. In any case, deducting it from the total reserve, there remains an accumulated insurance fund of £575,000., or eighteen months' income. The European had, at the publication of its last accounts, less than 6¾ per cent. of its assumed liabilities in hand, while some other offices have from 20 to 30 per cent. And in this reckoning it is assumed that the assets are realisable in cash at the values assigned to them in the balance-sheet. £42,425 was held principally by the Treasury against the guarantee business, according to the Act of Parliament under which the European obtained the privilege of guaranteeing the fidelity of Government officials. At the time of the last annual meeting there was a sum of £36,000 locked up in New York, which the Insurance Superintendent might retain to pay American claims. Next there was £234,000, which was not cash at all, but—as in the case of the Albert—represented the "value" of the goodwill of the companies absorbed. Next, £86,000, consisting of premiums in course of payment, agents' balances, and sundries; and then £65,000 balance on deposit at bankers'; but though this would appear from the accounts to be available, £38,000 of it would seem to be at Melbourne, £15,000 at Sydney, and £13,849 in Colonial Securities. Then there was on current accounts at the bankers' £14,323. Deducting from the total assets the value of the goodwills—which 'value' is now clearly illusory, and certainly ought never to have been reckoned as an asset—and the cash invested in America and Australia, and liable to detention for local claims, there remained £421,029. Of this £143,745 was in mortgages and life-interests, £11,110 in leases, fixtures, &c,; £110,426 in loans on policies and half-credit premiums, £86,690 premiums in the course of payment, and £69,058 in Consols, Indian Stock, and at bankers'. Such is the composition of the £421,029, to meet upwards of £11,000,000 of liabilities."

Eleven million pounds of liabilities! At first sight the very enormity of the sum makes the full force of the catastrophe difficult to grasp, familiar as we all unhappily are with "big" failures. The woe and regret that this assurance disaster will carry into thousands of homes is inconceivable. What have the "patrons" and the directors to say in palliation of their conduct? Public opinion demands a searching investigation into the company's affairs, and we hope not many days will elapse before the inquiry is begun.

An American Attempt at Railway Speed.—The recent railway combinations at New York, by which three direct rival lines are opened up to the west, cause some of the journals to express an anticipation of numerous accidents from the activity of competition. Each of the three great lines—the Pennsylvania Central, the Erie, and the New York Central—proposes to run through trains to Chicago in 30 hours, including stoppages. The distance by the Pennsylvania Central is 899 miles, by the Erie 980 miles, and by the New York Central 981, and an average speed will, therefore, have to be kept up while the trains are in motion of considerably more than 30 miles an hour. The Philadelphia *Ledger* remarks that on the thoroughly well-built roads of England such a rate is safe, but adds—"We tremble for the consequences when we think of our uneven tracks, sharp curves, and 40-ton locomotives." The probability, however, is recognised that "the wear and tear of this high speed will prove so enormous as soon to force a return to the slower but safer pace heretofore followed."

The Channel squadron arrived in Cork harbour on Monday.

A WORCESTERSHIRE HARVEST HOME.

Rich as our language is in rural and domestic phrases, few words have a more attractive and truly English ring about them than "Harvest-home." The name is associated with everything that is pleasant and good: with assemblages of villages, old churches decorated with the fruits of the harvest, a homely discourse by the parish priest, a bountiful dinner, and merry-making of the heartiest description. A Harvest Festival is the great event of the year in village history. It is never forgotten. The seniors, smoking their pipes in the mellow autumn twilight, or gathered around the cheerful fire of the "Red Cow" of winter nights, recall the pleasures of past harvest gatherings, and cap one another's stories of how the Squire led off the dance with the housekeeper, and young Master flirted with all the girls. And the good fare provided for them in the barn, all decked with flags and flowers and mottoes,—do you think they forget that item of the programme? Their eyes sparkle and their mouths water as they think of the roast beef and mutton, the plum-puddings, and the strong ale, followed by a liberal distribution of snuff and tobacco for the old, and sweetmeats for the youngsters; and the remembrance of the feast serves to lighten toil and sweeten labour until next harvest-time comes round.

To those who declare that English harvest-home glories have disappeared with ignorance and vice in the rural districts, we would recommend a visit to the festival which is annually held at Elmley Castle, a charming little village near Pershore, Worcestershire; it is a model harvest-home in every particular. The preparations for celebrating the festival are talked of and arranged weeks beforehand; for it is a serious business to carry all out as it should be The villagers of Elmley Castle are, however, peculiarly fortunate in the possession of exceptionally kind and liberal friends and employers, and a clergyman whose zeal for the spiritual welfare of his parishioners is only equalled by his regard for their temporal comforts. To mention those ladies and gentlemen who are foremost in all good worlls in that picturesque Worcestershire village would be to name almost every resident in the neighbourhood. The principal landed proprietors are, Joseph Jones, Esq., of Bricklehampton Hall, and R. W. Johnson, Esq., the latter of whom has recently purchased a large estate; Lady Pakington has also considerable property in the village, and takes so great an interest in all that pertains to the welfare of the people that she may well be called the Lady Bountiful of the place.

This year's harvest festival at Elmley Castle was celebrated on Tuesday, the 21st ult. with all the usual festivities, and the additional ceremony of the opening a new school, with which the generosity of Lady Pakington has provided the place.

A charming picture was presented to the eye by the decorations which were lavished upon the village, and when the church bells called everyone to worship, it was to find the old church adorned with flowers, wheat, evergreens, flags, and bannerets. For this occasion there was a joint ceremony, a procession being formed of the villagers and school-children, headed by the Pershore Rifle Volunteer Band. These arrived at the crowded church, Morning Prayer was said, the Rev. John Haviland and the Vicar (the Rev. Hugh Bennett) officiating, and the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Worcester (Dr. Philpott) preaching from St. Matthew xviii. 14, "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." The education of the poor was the principal theme upon which his lordship dwelt; after which, referring to the festival they were keeping, he asked the congregation to join him in hearty thanksgiving to Almighty God for granting an abundant harvest, and pointed out that, notwithstanding all the skill and industry of the farmers in tilling the soil and sowing the seed, aided by the ingenious machinery which men of late years have devised to assist them in agriculture, the granting of favourable seasons for the growth and ripening and in-gathering of the crops must come alone from our Creator and Preserver, ; that although "Paul may plant and Apollos may water, it is God who giveth the increase."

There was a collection on behalf of the new school, to which, after the sermon, the procession walked and took part in a special service. Sir John Pakington (who was accompanied by Lady Pakington) then made an interesting address, chiefly on the subject of education, in the course of which the right hon. baronet referred to the pleasure which it gave Lady Pakington to have been enabled to confer any benefit upon that locality, with which she was so closely connected.

In a large decorated tent erected in a field near the church dinner was provided. Upwards of 300 persons were present. Sir John Pakington presided, and amongst those present were the Bishop and Mrs. Philpott, Sir John and Lady Pakington, R. W. Johnson, Esq. and Mrs. Johnson, Rev. E. Linzie and Misses Linzie, Mr. Parker and Miss Parker, Mrs. Barker, Captain Parker and Miss Parker (of Worcester), Joseph Jones, Esq. (of Abberley), Rev. J. Haviland, Mrs. Haviland, and Mr. Arthur Haviland, Rev. R. L. Bartlett and Mrs. Bartlett, Rev. H. G. Fausett, F. D. Holland, Esq. and Mrs. Holland, A. R. Hudson, Esq. and Mrs. A. Hudson, T. J. Shekell, Esq. and Mrs. Shekell, the Misses Shekell, Rev. T. Vines, Rev. T. L. Staynes and Mrs Staynes, C. Hudson, Esq. and Mrs. C. Hudson, Rev. Hugh Bennett and Mrs. Bennett, Miss Bennett, Miss Mousley, Mrs. Carden, and Miss Woodward, H. Moore, Esq., H. Bluck, Esq., Messrs. Righton, Abell, Blizard, &c.

Speeches were made by the right hon. Chairman, the Bishop (who responded for the clergy), R. W. Johnson, Esq. (who proposed the toast of the day, "The health of Sir John Pakington," who was so well known and respected east, west, north and south,—a man of great ability and judgment, and who never displayed his ability and judgment with better taste than when he selected Lady Pakington as his partner for life), the Rev. E. Linzie (who responded on behalf of the "helpers and visitors"), Mr. Bluck, and the Rev. Hugh Bennett, whose health, proposed by the Bishop, was warmly drunk.

After dinner about 200 of the matrons of Elmley and the neighbourhood were regaled, as were also the children, and rural sports and dancing followed.

We give Illustrations of the festivities and the school in this Number.

THE EMPEROR SIGNING THE "SENATUS CONSULTUM."

The signing and delivering of the Senatus Consultum—a measure which has excited so much discussion—took place in the Gardens of St. Cloud. We give a sketch of the historical occurrence, and also the text of the document, as it appeared in the *Journal Officiel*:—

"Napoleon, by the grace of God and the national will, Emperor of the French, to all whom these presents may come, greeting,

"I. The Emperor and the Legislative Body have the formation of laws.

"II. Ministers depend only on the Emperor; they deliberate in council under his presidency; they are responsible; they cannot be impeached but by the Senate.

"III. Ministers may be members of the Senate or of the Legislative Body; they have the right of *entrée* in either assembly, and the right of speech whenever they demand it.

"IV. The sittings of the Senate are public; the demand of five members is sufficient to constitute a secret session.

"V. The Senate may, while pointing out the modifications of which a law appears to it to be susceptible, decide that it shall be remitted for further consideration to the Legislative Body. It may, in any case, oppose the promulgation of the law, and the law to the promulgation of which the Senate is opposed cannot be presented again to the Legislative Body during the same session.

"VI. At the opening of each session, the Legislative Body names its president, vice-president, and secretaries. It also names its questors.

"VII. Every member of the Senate or the Legislative Body has the right of addressing an interpellation to the Government. Orders of the day, with reason assigned, may be adopted. The reference to the bureaux of such orders of the day is a matter of right when demanded by the Government. The bureaux will name a commission, on whose report the assembly will decide.

"VIII. No amendment can be taken into consideration unless it has been submitted to the commission charged to consider the *projêt de loi* and communicated to the Government. When the Government and the commission cannot agree, the Council of State shall pronounce its opinion and the Legislative Body shall decide.

"IX. The budget of expenditure is presented to the Legislative Body in chapters and articles. The budget of each Ministry is voted chapter by chapter, agreeably to the schedule annexed to the present Senatus Consultum.

"X. The modifications which may in future be made in the tariffs of customs or of postage by international treaties shall be binding only in virtue of a law.

"XI. The constitutional relations at present established between the Government of the Emperor, the Senate, and the Legislative Body can be modified only by a Senatus Consultum. The formal relations between these powers are established by Imperial decree. The Senate and the Legislative Body make their own internal regulations.

"XII. All acts contrary to the present Senatus Consultum are abrogated, especially arts. 8 and 13, the second paragraph of art. 24, arts. 26 and 40, the fifth paragraph of art. 42, the first paragraph of art. 43, art. 44, of the Constitution; arts. 3 and 5 of the Senatus Consultum of Dec. 25, 1852; art. 1 of the Senatus Consultum of Dec. 31, 1861.

"Deliberated and voted in Session, at the Palace of the Senate, Sept. 6, 1869.

"E. Rouher, President."

A new form of electric light has been patented by Mr. F. Jenkins, of Edinburgh. The light is produced by a rapid succession of sparks, due to successive charges and discharges of a condenser charged directly from a voltaic battery without the intervention of any induction coil. When the invention is used for this purpose the condenser is on the beacon, and the battery on shore is connected with a terminal on the beacon by a submarine cable or aërial wire. The condenser is charged and discharged by a tongue or contact-maker, moving backwards and forwards between the battery terminal and an earth terminal.

MARVELLOUS RAINS.

Every now and then newspaper paragraphists treat the wonder lovers to strange stories about showers of blood, and ashes, and insects, and fishes, and reptiles, and other pluvious prodigies that have come down from the clouds upon some favoured spot, either with or instead of the aqueous drops that are supposed to be the only produce of the higher regions of the atmosphere. These accounts are generally true as far as they go, but they seldom extend to the suggestion of a reasonably probable explanation of the phenomena under description. This omission may serve a purpose. There are those who would rather cherish a mystery than see its death-blow administered. Here is a case to the very point. It is an old one, but humanity has not much altered since its time as regards the love of the marvellous. In 1670, one morning the people of the Hague awoke to find their lakes and ditches full of red liquid, whereas they had held clear water the night before. Of course the inference was that it had rained blood during the night; but a certain physician took some of the water and put it under a microscope, when he found that the colour was due to the presence in it of prodigious swarms of minute red animalculæ. The Hollanders would not, however, give up the miracle, so they consoled themselves by declaring that the sudden apparition of such a multitude of insects was as great a prodigy as a shower of blood would have been; and for generations after it was acknowledged that this portent foretold the bloodshed brought about by Louis the Fourteenth's invasion of the country.

The little insects that supplied this tradition were no other than the red water-fleas that dwell under the weeds and along the edges of ditches and ponds, usually out of sight, but coming from their retreat at certain seasons of the year, and then making the waters vivid with their motions and colour. They never came from the sky at all. But all the showers of blood are not so completely unreal: red water has poured down upon this earth scores of times, and when we leave the fabulous or at least highly-imaginative periods of history and come to times of accurate record and cautious research we find abundant instances of it, and plenty of evidence upon its real character. We need not go out of this century if we want a score of cases. There was one on the 14th of March, 1813. At two o'clock in the afternoon the people of Gerace, in Greece, perceived a dense cloud coming to them across the sea; it swept on, and capped the mountains and obscured the sun. At first of a pale red colour, it deepened till it was, as the description has it, as red as fire; and such a gloom did it cause, that the candles had to be lighted in the houses. The unnatural darkness terrified the people to the extent of sending them in crowds to the Cathedral to pray in public for their sins. The sky was like red hot iron; and by-and-bye came a thunderstorm, and the sea was lashed into a fury. And then poured down great drops of red fluid, which was declared to be blood by some and fire by others. No one was hurt, however, and when night came the clouds cleared away, and with them the popular fear; but a red dust remained upon the ground, and when it was taken up and examined by the analysts it was found to be of an earthy nature, being chiefly made up of *silica* and *alumina*, with a fair proportion of oxide of iron, to which its terrifying colour was due. We are not told where the dust came from in this case, but inferring from others upon which there is fuller information we need not doubt but that it was caught up by a whirlwind from some sandy region hard by and mixed with the aqueous vapour that formed the cloud which ultimately furnished the rain. It was thus that a remarkable fall of red rain that occurred at Genes in February, 1841, was accounted for. This was not a solitary shower, but a steady three days' rain; and the colouring substance was found to be mineral, and such as abounded in the immediate neighbourhood; but curiously there was an oily, fatty matter with it. At first this looked mysterious, but when it was remembered that on the soil that yielded the dust olives were cultivated, the enigma was solved. In 1846, a sanguinary looking downfall dismayed the people in many parts of France. Clothes and parasols were as it were blood-stained, and when the country folk saw the pastures covered with the red precipitate they became so alarmed for the safety of their cattle that they would not let them feed but drove them from the blighted fields. One sensible man, however, collected a bottle of the coloured fluid and sent it to a chemist in Lyons, who pronounced the red matter to be an argillaceous earth similar to that which the painters know by the name of ochre. The remarkable feature in this storm was its extent. The meteorologists traced it across the Atlantic. It began in Guayana and passed to New York; it was recognised at the Azores and crossed on to France, traversing the Alps and dissipating itself gradually in Italy. Here we have a wonderful sample of the transporting power of the wind, for the primitive dust was probably of American origin; and here we see how the germs of disease may be carried over thousands of miles. This red matter was found to contain particles of vegetable matter and also some infusorial animals.

The present year has witnessed a case of wind-borne dust, and resulting falls of water tinted with it. The sandy deserts of Africa send warm winds across the Mediterranean which are frequently felt by the Neapolitans. This year, in April last, the *sirocco* brought a rain whereof the drops were charged with reddish ferrugineous powder, and it was tolerably evident that this was nothing else than the dust drawn by the Simoon from the Sahara. Even so far across the continent as Berlin African dust has been traced by means of the microscope.

All the colouring matter of rain is not, however, mineral: often it is exclusively vegetable. It was on the 10th of May, 1836, when the valley of Aspe in the Pyrenees was covered with a yellow powder which the people took for sulphur, but which turned out to be the pollen from the flowering trees of two forests in the neighbourhood, over which the wind that brought the deposit had blown. Sometimes, it would appear, that there is a mixture of substances and colours. Pliny has told of a rain of milk and blood; the white matter may have been of vegetable nature, or it may have been a chalky substance analagous to that which was seen to fall in the vicinity of Mount Etna in 1781, concerning which an imposing account appears in the Transactions of our Royal Society. This white deposit was held to be an oxide doubtless thrown up by the volcano and suspended in the aqueous vapours of the atmosphere, falling when these fell; Pliny's milkiness probably owed its origin to a similar cause: the sanguinary part we have no difficulty in recognizing. The seemingly fabulous stories of ancient chroniclers are seldom quite untrue; read by the light of modern knowledge the apparent falsity resolves itself into mere error of interpretation and excusable exaggeration. Yet we cannot always find parallels like that of the blood-rain of old and the iron-dust showers of to-day. What, for instance, could have been a rain of flesh which we find recorded by the Roman historian? A fall of wool might have been something like thistle-down, but what are we to understand by a shower of burnt bricks?

In the vegetable department of pluvial prodigies showers of edible matter hold a conspicuous place. Much has been written by Biblical critics concerning the manna that fell from heaven upon the children of Israel; the much referring, of course, to arguments upon the nature of the substance. We need not dwell upon the various hypotheses that have been tendered in explanation of this point; suffice it for our purpose to recite one or two cases that could be stretched into apparent similarity with that recorded in the Book of Genesis. The *Courrier de Constantinople* for one day in January, 1846, makes mention of a species of manna having fallen on two occasions in various parts of Asia Minor; the first fall alluded to was in 1841 and the other in 1846; and it is said that the people, reduced by scarcity of food, used the celestial produce for the making of bread. Singularly enough, the same year witnessed a repetition of this rare phenomenon. It was on the 3rd of April, in the district of Sieviencianу in Russia. Between six and seven in the evening a south-west wind brought up a storm-cloud in a sky previously clear. There was fierce lightning and heavy thunder, and a warm rain fell abundantly and continued during the night. The next morning a farm bailiff looking from his window thought that he perceived the ground covered with hailstones. He went out to convince himself, but instead of hail he found that the white fallen matter was in the form of little balls of a substance unknown to him. He collected some on a plate and exposed them in the sun to dry. They were of various sizes, ranging from a nut to a walnut; all were broken, but the pieces could easily be united, each being the segment of a sphere. The exterior convex surface was perfectly smooth, the broken part exhibited a lammellated structure, and the nature of the substance was somewhat gelatinous. A small quantity of it that was exposed to the rain for four days offered no appearance of decay. Some of the dried specimens were triturated and gave a white farinaceous powder; when burnt, the matter left very little ash; it swelled in water, and dissolved in spirit. Taken altogether the substance appeared to be a species of resinous gum and it was held by the *savan* who communicated these facts to the French Academy of Sciences that it may well have been the veritable man-hu of the Hebrews, cited in Genesis. It was suggested that it was a vegetable product *sui generis* coming from balsamic emanations accumulated in the higher regions of the atmosphere and metamorphosed into a hail-like form by the action of electricity.

What is to be said of such a story as this? We are bound to believe that the peculiar globules were found, but we are not even told that they fell from the sky; this is taken for granted, because there did not appear to be any other source for them. But a learned meteorologist who wrote some years before this event took place explained certain "showers of corn" which he had read of by showing that the grains were the tubercles of a plant known as the *ficaria*, what we call the pilewort. It appears that the leaves and stalks of this vegetable dry up and leave nothing but the roots, which consist of from six to twenty small tubercles fixed to radicles. A heavy rain draws up these tubercles, separates them from the root, and carries them to inclined places, so that they are frequently found after rain, and the uninitiated of course think they have fallen with it. The learned doctor to whom we have alluded rejects this explanation of his manna-fall, but there are few who will not rather accept it than his hypothesis of a cloud-generated balsam.

Often as we hear of "raining cats and dogs," it does not appear that anyone has yet been able to put on record a reliable instance of such a prodigy. Yet we have plenty of cases of alleged descent of animal organisms of a lower order, to wit, insects and reptiles, and occasionally fishes. We need not go back farther than the commencement of the present year for a shower of living grubs. On the night of the 29th of January there was a snow-storm and a violent wind at Araches in High Savoy, and in the morning the new fallen snow was found scattered over with live larvæ, that certainly could not have been hatched in the neighbourhood, for the thermometer had been for some days previously several degrees below the freezing point. FIr the most part the insects belonged to a tribe known to naturalists by the name of Trogossitæ; some, however, were the caterpillars of a small moth of the *nocturna* order. Their character betrayed their source, for it identified them with certain forests of Central France, which were known to be their homes. So that it was evident that a strong wind had transported them to Savoy, several thousand feet above their natural dwelling place, and perhaps several hundred miles away from it! The observer who witnessed this case notes another that occurred in 1854, when many thousands of insects, chiefly alive, were cast upon a heath in the neigbourhood of Turin. These proved to be of a species never found but in the island of Sardinia. The little flies, for they were of the hemipterous order, had actually been wafted across the Mediterranean.

The toad and frog showers are perhaps the most wonderful of all. The cases are all similar; one is as good as another as an example, so if you please we will take a seemingly well authenticated instance related to the French Academy by a Professor Pontus in the year 1836. The man of science was in a diligence, near Toulouse, one day in the month of August, 1804, when a thick cloud suddenly covered the sky and down came heavy drops of rain, with thunder and lightning accompaniment. The vehicle had stopped to change horses, when two horsemen came up and told of the storm they had passed through, for the thickest of it was at some distance from the halting place. The strangest part of their story was that they had been pelted with small toads! The professor tells us in his report that he saw them shaken off the mens, cloaks; and he goes on to say that presently the diligence came to the place where the cloud had broken, and that he and others were witnesses of a most rare and extraordinary phenomenon. The road and all the fields to right and to left were scattered with toads of, as he guessed, a month or two old. He saw them lying three or four deep; the horses' hoofs and the carriage wheels crushed them by thousands—I am not exaggerating, "*écrasèrent plusieurs milliers*," are the author's words. Over the living macadam they travelled for a quarter-of-an-hour, the horses going at a trot.

All who witnessed this sight believed in the atmospheric origin of the young batrachians, as others who had seen similar ones before had believed, and I suppose as those who may see such again will maintain also. But to a non-spectator the evidence is not so convincing. Arago would not accept it for a moment; but he was not by any means the first who refused to give credence to such miracles. More than three hundred years before our era Theophrastus gave an explanation of rain-born frogs, which is doubtless the true one. Saith he: "Those little frogs fall not with the rain as many think, but they appear after showers, because being previously buried in the earth they have not the water to make them a way out of their holes." This was also the opinion of a sagacious Frenchman who discussed the question in 1834. No one has ever seen the frogs fall upon high places, such as house-tops; true they get on to people's clothes, but they may jump there. The horsemen in the above narrative shook them from their cloaks, but it does not follow that they fell there; they were probably kicked up by the horses' hoofs. Whenever a prodigious appearance of any kind manifests itself, a philosopher is needed to give a rational account of it, and all men are not philosophers; all have not the capacity for sifting the real from the apparent. As knowledge spreads prodigies diminish. Many years ago, after a hurricane that blew over a town near Paris, the streets were strewed with fishes, large and small. The common people, of course, insisted that the clouds gave them birth; but it turned out that not far away, upon an eminence, a certain fish pond had been actually blown dry by the high wind; only the larger fish were left at the bottom, the smaller fry had been tossed over the adjacent country.

Meteoric stones are out of our category, yet these have no doubt given rise to many a wondrous tale; and meteoric matter may now and then assume a form that puzzles those even who would not wonder at an ordinary meteorolite. "Iron that came out of sponge," is a very good description of meteoric iron, which often presents a spongy structure, and of this Latin writers make mention. There is, too, in old weather chronicles the description of a curious product which the Germans call *Trauer papier*, or mourning paper. This substance fell in large quantities in Courland, in January, 1684. It was an agglomeration of black leaves, just like burnt paper in appearance, but harder and more brittle. The chemists some time after got hold of a specimen that had been preserved in a museum, and upon analysis they found that its constituents were silica, magnesia, iron, nickel, &c., in fact, just those of an ordinary meteorolite; so that it was merely a peculiar form of meteoric matter. It was said that some black bodies like beans fell with it: those may have been ordinary aërolites.

Once a man who had seen a rain of living creatures went to a naturalist of fame with the story, insisting upon its truth. The philosopher listened, and said he, "It is fortunate that you saw the marvels, for now I credit it: had I seen it myself I should not have believed it."

J. CARPENTER.

THE POLICE COURTS.

A DISTRESSING CASE.

Last week we reported the case of Captain Vivian Craig, formerly governor of Pentonville Prison, who was charged with embezzling two sums of £22 and £25, the property of the Queen. Captain Craig has since been tried at the Central Criminal Court. Mr. Poland was counsel for the prosecution, which had been instituted by the Treasury; Mr. Besley defended the prisoner.—Mr. Poland having stated the circumstances of the affair, Mr. Besley said it was truly a very sad case. The prisoner's family had been in the army for generations, and he himself had been Paymaster-General and acting Governor of one of her Majesty's West Indian dependencies, in which position he had the control of a large portion of the public money, and had gained the respect and confidence of every one with whom he had been officially connected. In fact, a man of greater honour and integrity never lived. The facts of the embezzlements were also extremely painful. The prisoner had been induced by a man in a superior position to make advances to him, with apparently sincere promises to repay him. He had a wife and eight children to support, and the moneys were never repaid. Unfortunately, to support his family the prisoner had taken several small sums from the Government funds, believing that in time he would be able to replace them. This he could not do, and he left England for America, where he had since been engaged in several small situations. His family were in the most abject want, and he was forced to return to England to attempt to relieve them. Under these circumstances he (Mr. Besley) trusted the Court would think fit to pass the lightest possible punishment, especially taking into consideration the facts that the money had since been replaced, and that he had been for five years virtually punished and prevented from seeing those who were nearest and dearest to him. Mr. Poland added that the prisoner did not attempt to conceal his name on his arrival in England.—The Recorder sentenced the prisoner to three months' hard labour.

CAUTION TO PETROLEUM VENDORS.

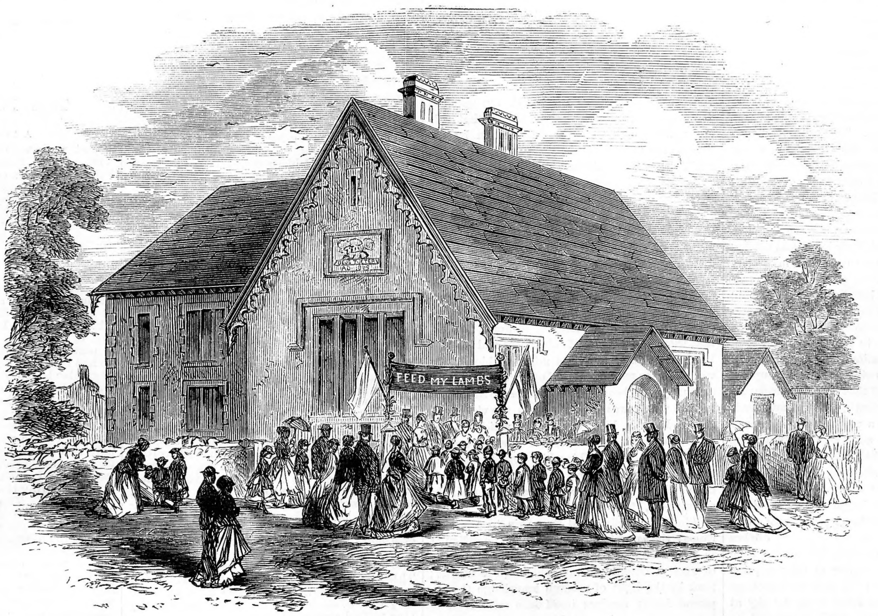
At the Southwark Police-court, Messrs. W. E. Welch and Co., patent waterproof composite manufacturers, Portsmouth, were summoned by Mr. Fogden, an inspector in the employ of the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Company, for unlawfully sending to the railway for transmission to Portsmouth a box containing a quantity of benzone, naphtha, and tar without giving the proper notice to the company's servants, whereby they had rendered themselves liable to a penalty of £20. Mr. Hicklin, on the part of the defendants, contended that they directed their man to pack up the empty cans in the box and throw away the contents of the full ones. Had the man done so there would have been no complaint. He called Edward Harley, who said that he packed the boxes by some mistake—put in the full cans instead of the empty ones. He had since been discharged. Mr. Partridge said he was satisfied the defendants were cognisant of the contents of the box. It was a serious offence, as there was no knowing what damage or loss of life it might have caused. He therefore fined the defendants £20, as an example must be made in such cases.

SENTENCE OF DEATH ON A WORCESTERSHIRE MURDERER.

At the Central Criminal Court William Taylor, aged 23, a private soldier of the 57th regiment, was indicted for the wilful murder of Arthur Skullin. The prisoner was a private in the 57th regiment, which was stationed at Devonport, and the deceased was a corporal in the same regiment. The prisoner appeared to have borne a good character, but on the night of the 27th July he broke out of barracks, and got drunk. For this offence he was sentenced to seven days' extra drill. The deceased had the duty of seeing that the sentence was carried out, and the prisoner was evidently under the impression that the corporal had acted harshly towards him. The prisoner underwent his punishment for two or three days. A portion of the punishment consisted in his being required to carry his knapsack full while undergoing his drill, this knapsack weighing about 50lbs. On the morning of the 31st July the prisoner was again called upon to go through his drill, and the deceased ascertained that his knapsack was empty. He ordered him to go back to the barracks and fill his knapsack, and at the same time threatened to report him and have him punished with additional drill. The prisoner was heard to mutter something to the effect that "he would put the corporal out of his mess," and shortly afterwards he appeared to have deliberately presented his rifle at deceased and shot him in the head, killing him on the spot. It appeared that when the prisoner was under examination before the magistrate he called two witnesses for the purpose of proving that the deceased had been in the habit of behaving harshly to him. On behalf of the prisoner, John Cook, dyer, Charles Poole, town crier, Betsy Poole, and Thomas Taylor, carpet weaver, all of Kidderminster, were called to prove that he was insane; they described him as having been a violent boy, who was considered imbecile and unable to do anything for a livelihood. His father, it appeared, died in a lunatic asylum, and his grandmother was stated to have been insane for some time previous to her death. The evidence as to the insanity appeared to be of a very weak description; and in order to rebut it the governor, surgeon, and chaplain of Exeter gaol, and the governor and surgeon of Newgate stated their opinion to be that the prisoner was perfectly sane, and that they had never observed the slightest indication of insanity about him. The prisoner was found guilty and sentenced to death.

NEW SCHOOL AT ELMLEY CASTLE, WORCESTERSHIRE.

The handsome new building which we engrave this week is the gift of Lady Pakington to the inhabitants of Elmley Castle, the festivities at which are described elsewhere in this Number. Until now only thirty or forty children could be taught at Elmley Castle old school. The new building, however, will accommodate about eighty scholars, and will be used both as a day and Sunday school. Mr. Rowley, of Walsall, is the builder, and the cost is about £500. The carting of the material for the new institution was undertaken by the farmers of the village, which has reduced the cost of the building by about £70.



NEW SCHOOL AT ELMLEY CASTLE, WORCESTERSHIRE.

"BRINGING IN THE HERRINGS."

Those who have visited Whitby during the fishing season will recognise in Mr. Green's full-page drawing a faithful representation of this picturesque scene. From the pier you look down on groups of men, women, boys, and girls all intent upon receiving the herrings, a large or small catch of which to them means either a decent livelihood until the approach of the next season, or a bare subsistence. The boats full of fish, the anxiety shown to get the herrings ashore and packed off to the markets, the costume of those engaged in the work, and the beautiful natural surroundings, make just such a scene as an artist loves to transfer to canvas, and we have great pleasure in presenting to our readers the result of Mr. Green's study at Whitby which has been specially drawn for The Illustrated Midland News.

CROSSING NIAGARA ON A VELOCIPEDE.

One of those performances of which danger is the only element of attraction recently took place at the Falls of Niagara. On August 25th, an acrobat, known in America as Professor Jenkins, crossed the torrents on a Velocipede, traversing the same course as that which some years ago was taken by Blondin. A desire to render himself as famous as the hero of the high rope seems to have urged the Professor to make his foolhardy venture, which however, all things considered, was not so perilous as that of his renowned predecessor. The power of balancing being acquired, and the rope properly slung, no such difficulties as those which Blondin encountered had to be overcome in this instance. The wheels of the velocipede were grooved and the vehicle so constructed that it travelled more securely and easily than a man could walk along the rope. Indeed, according to many accounts, the spectators who assembled to witness the exploit were disappointed in the sensation they expected to experience. We do not, however, wish to see it repeated in this country; the performances of velocipede riders are sufficiently astonishing on *terra firma* to render their being attempted in mid-air quite unnecessary. It may interest some of our readers to know that the combined weight of Jenkins, his velocipede and balance-pole, did not exceed 293 lbs., and that the time occupied in crossing the Falls was eleven minutes.

MIDLAND EXHIBITORS AT AMSTERDAM EXHIBITION.

The following Midland Exhibitors at the above Exhibition have received awards:

Class 1.—Houses and fittings, &c.—W. Blews and Sons, Birmingham, gasfittings, diplome d'excellence: Partridge and Co., Birmingham, gas brackets, bronze medal: C. J. Philip, Birmingham, chandeliers, silver medal; Maw and Co., Broseley, Mosaic tiles, diplome d'excellence.

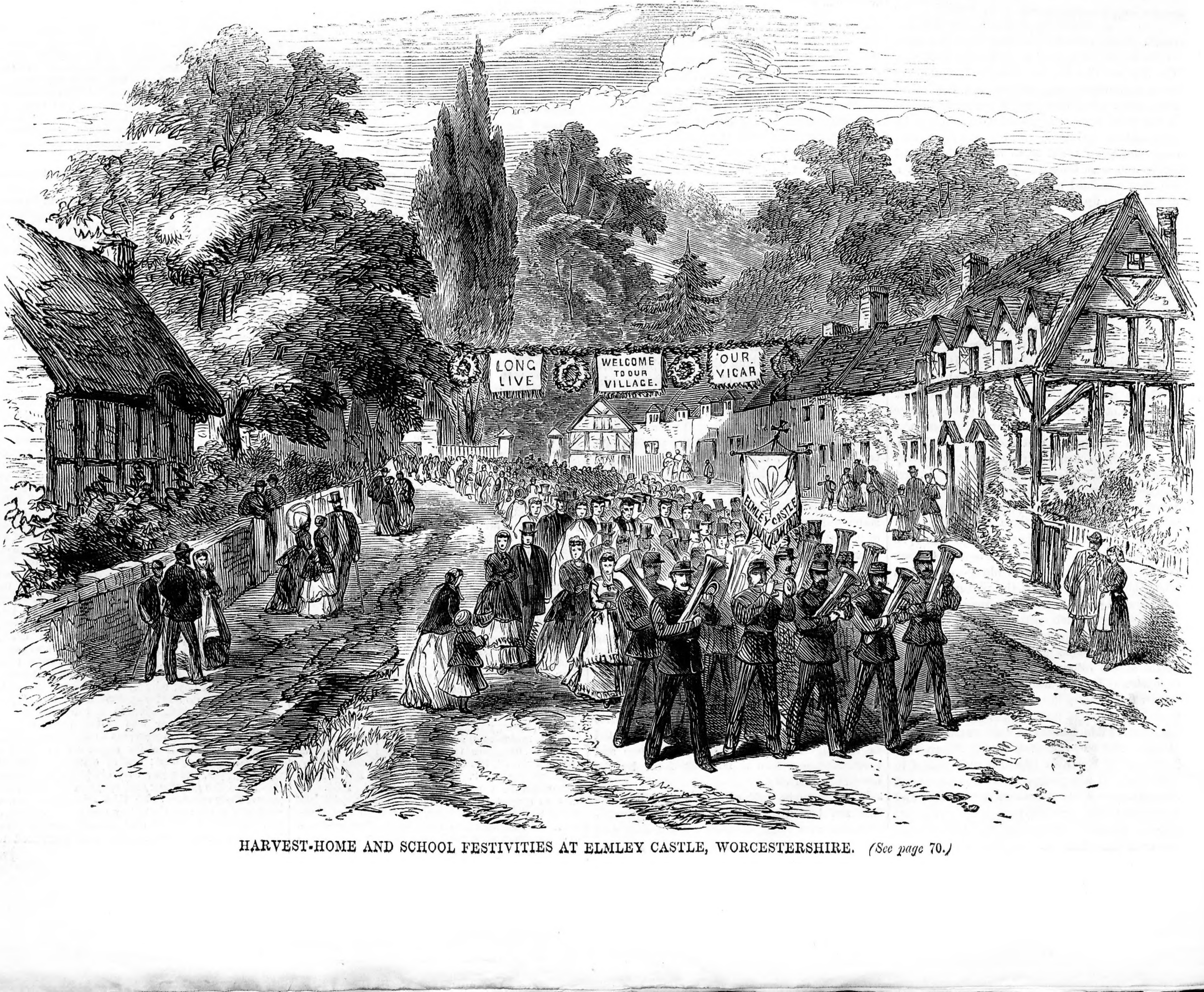
Class 2.—Furniture, &c.—Crichley and Co., Birmingham, umbrella stands, mention extraordinaire; Mander Brothers, Wolverhampton, resins and varnishes, mention extraordinaire: Peyton and Peyton, Birmingham, iron and brass bedsteads, diplome d'excellence; Morton and Sons, Kidderminster, carpets, diplome d'excellence.

Class 4.—Food.—S. Allsopp and Son, Burton-on-Trent, pale ale, diplome d'honneur; Banbury Brewery Company, Banbury, brown stout, bronze medal.

Class 5.—Tools and Implements.—Kirby, Beard, and Co., London, fish-hooks and needles, diplome d'honneur; D. F. Taylor and Co., Birmingham, pins and needles, silver medal; W. Woodfield and Son, Redditch, needles, silver medal.

Class 7.—Societies, &c., for Promoting the Well-being of the Working Classes.—Gustave Meinhardt, Birmingham, bronze medal.

The Earl and Countess of Derby expect their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales to visit Knowsley early in November.



HARVEST-HOME AND SCHOOL FESTIVITIES AT ELMLEY CASTLE, WORCESTERSHIRE. *(See page 70.)*

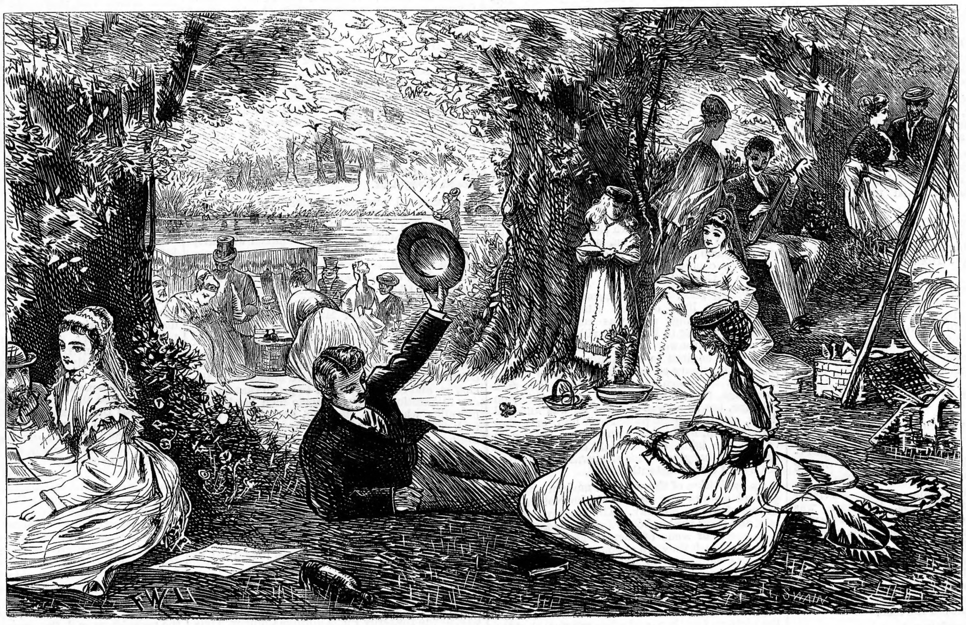
AT MALVERN.

Whether you are an invalid or in robust health —smoke-dried or fresh from the sea-side—a ramble over the Malvern Hills must do you good.

If an invalid, either imaginary or unfortunately real, your nerves will be braced by the invigorating air; if you have been inhaling the sea breezes or the dense atmosphere of a manufacturing town, you will find the change delightful. It is the privilege of those who live in the Midland Counties to be within an easy distance of this healthy spot. From almost any part they can start at a reasonable hour and return home before nightfall, having in the meantime enjoyed the most splendid climate and scenery in England. Malvern has greatly improved of late years. The picturesque houses, standing in their own grounds, have increased in number, the town shops have assumed a better appearance, some vieing with those of any other locality in importance, and the hills are more easily accessible by the roads and bridle-paths that have been made on them by some charitable individual.

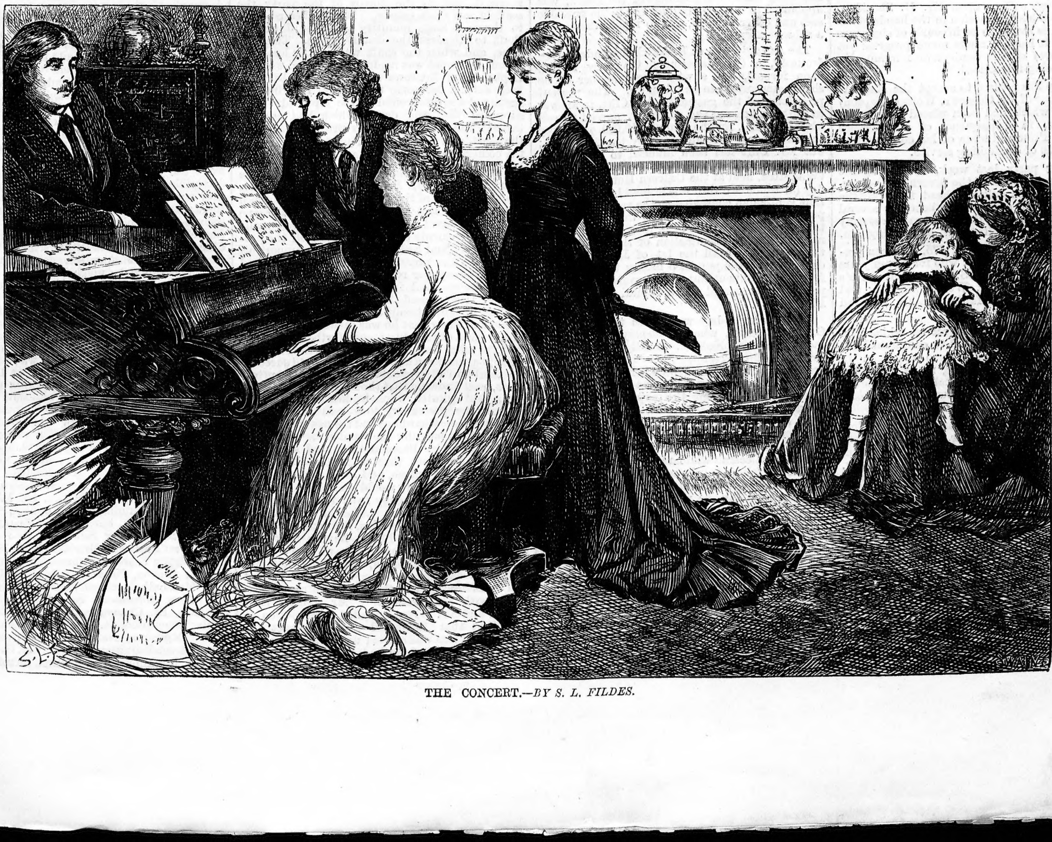
Water still holds its own as a radical means of cure; the principal chemist in the place seems to despair of selling physic, and has taken to photography and dealing in patent wine bins. The hydropathic establishments are in full operation. Capital institutions they are, where you can combine the business of getting well with the pleasure of billiards and other pastimes. The early rising, which used to be so irksome to valetudinarians after a London season, has been modified, and, taking the patent wine bins as a favourable sign, the water cure has become less Spartan in its *régime* than it was formerly. Here are the public baths, whose enterprising proprietor, among other aquatic luxuries, offers you a Running Sitz bath, on one condition—it is not to last longer than ten minutes—a stipulation the wisdom of which very much depends on the running, and whether it is done by you or the bath. Such a bath must be worth trying as a matter of curiosity involving probably quite a new sensation. Here too, you can have a swim in a kind of aquarium, where you will feel more like a Polar bear than under any other circumstance. At the Hay well public baths you can indulge in all sorts of bathing, but, as the attendant will tell you, if you wish to undergo the process of packing, that must be done at home, as it usually is. St. Ann's well flows as pleasantly as ever. It is a peculiarity of the Malvern wells that they all flow, which is contrary to the practice of wells generally. At St. Ann's, Mr. Down and his fair daughter will photograph you while you are drinking the waters, and you are thus enabled to bring away or leave behind you, a good impression of your visit. The Holy well has been turned to good account by Schweppe, who carries on the making of soda water, more or less clandestinely, in a back part of the Holy well premises. The huge hampers that are scattered about betray what is being done; you walk round the well-house, peep in at the back kitchen window, and there see where soda water, seltzer water, and many other waters come from. Some baths have been opened in the rooms above, but soda water baths have not yet been introduced. Were such an attractive novelty provided it is difficult to say how soon the Holy well would be dried up!

Of all the improvements that have been made at Malvern, none are so great as that which has taken place in the increased hotel accommodation now afforded to all comers. In 1863, the Imperial Hotel was opened. It is an important building of its kind, and as one of the most prominent features of the district we have included it this wee among our engravings. In a future Number we hope to give an exhaustive descriptive sketch of this famous seat of the water-cure, and at the same time add to our Illustrations of this picturesque locality.



THE PIC-NIC. —*BY F. W. LAWSON.*

In the year ending at Michaelmas, 1868, 518,794 persons were vaccinated in England and Wales by the public vaccinators, 513,045 successfully. This last number is equal to two-thirds of the number of births in the year. 385,635 were children under one year old; 127,407 were above one year old. This statement does not include vaccinations in private practice, and it is to be remembered that many of the children born died before the time for their vaccination had arrived.



THE CONCERT.—*BY S. L. FILDES.*

NEWS OF THE MIDLANDS.

Last week, Mr. George Storr (brother to Mr. J. R. Storr, tailor, of Boston, Lincolnshire) travelled from London to Kirton on a bicycle. The journey was completed in two days.

The Rev. J. B. Lewman, M.A., Oxon, late Undermaster at St. Peter's College, Radley, near Oxford, has been appointed an assistant master in the Lincoln Grammar School.

The Worksop and Mansfield Railway is being commenced. Within two years it is expected a through line in a direct route from Worksop to Nottingham will be opened.

A more humane practice of exposing poultry in Leicester market has been recently adopted. Instead of the fowls' legs being tied, the birds are exhibited in cages.

At a meeting at Darlaston, on Monday evening, a proposition to adopt the Local Government Act, 1858, was carried by a large majority The opponents of the measure demanded a poll.

Ann Tippin, 68 years old, died at New Radford, Notts, on Saturday, from taking an overdose of opium, which she had been in the habit of taking in great quantities at a time.

It is proposed asking the Prince of Wales, during his visit to Scarborough, to lay the foundation stone of the new Mechanics' Institution at Bradford, which is estimated to cost nearly £40,000.

The Thirteenth Annual Congress of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science opened on Wednesday at Bristol, under the Presidency of the Right Hon. Sir Stafford Northcote.

Michael Adkins, who was sentenced to death at the last Warwick Assizes for murdering his wife, at Baddesley Ensor, near Atherstone, has had his sentence commuted to twelve months' imprisonment, from the date of his conviction.

The Wolverhampton magistrates on Monday refused all the applications but one for music licenses which were made last week. The license granted was to Mr. Brewster, Prince of Wales' Concert Hall.

A public meeting of ratepayers was held at Wednesfield last week, to discuss the Sunday Liquor Traffic Bill. A motion "that this meeting desires to see all public houses closed during the Lord's Day" was unanimously adopted.

Miss Leonora Monckton, eldest surviving daughter of the late Hon. E. Monckton, was buried at Brewood, on Thursday. The tenantry followed the deceased lady to the grave, and the church was filled by spectators.

Mr. J. Cruxton, of the Fox and Dogs, Market Place, Dudley, has been fined £20 and costs for using his house unlawfully for betting upon horse races. A witness named Barnard, said to be a Birmingham man, proved the case.

On Wednesday evening a heavy storm broke over the Midlands, and lasted far into the night. The summer lightning was remarkably vivid, and the thunder-claps terrific. A great deal of rain fell. We have not heard that the storm did any damage either to life or property.

Thomas Chune, late sub-inspector of Shrewsbury, against whom there is a charge of embezzlement, was apprehended on Thursday at Liverpool, and on Friday was taken before the Salop magistrates, who remanded him until Tuesday. Chune was about to sail for New York.

The Chain Pit, at Clough Hall Colliery, Tunstall, where a fire broke out last week, is still closed. The level in which the fire raged is cut off from all supply of air, having water on one side, and a brick stopping on the other; so that the fire could not continue long.

A grape and other fruit show was held at the South Staffordshire Exhibition on Friday, Saturday, and Monday, and was very successful. Prizes were taken by Lord Bagot, the Earl of Shrewsbury, Mr. W. Mott, the Rev. H. Botfield, Major Acton, Mr. G. H. Perry, Mr. Parkes, &c.

A requisition calling upon Mr. H. Sheridan, M.P., to place his resignation in the hands of his constituents, is stated to be in course of signature at Dudley. It has not made much progress yet in consequence of the semi-private manner in which it is being introduced.

The Bishop has refused to accept the Rev. A. S. Prior's (vicar of St. George's, Wolverhampton) resignation, which had been placed in his lordship's hands, in consequence of a difference between Mr. Prior and some of his congregation as to the mode of conducting service.

A shooting party last week, in passing the Roving, upon the bank of the Severn, at Barrow, seeing a flock of sea gulls overhead, following the course of the river, succeeded in bringing several of them down. Among the number was a stormy petrel, shot by Mr. A. Ratcliffe, of Birmingham.

An address, with a purse of £75, has been presented to the Rev. J. Kelly, who for eleven years had been "rector" of SS. Mary and John's Roman Catholic Church, Wolverhampton; and who has now, owing to failing health, removed to Warwick.

"Art in industry," a subject on which Mr. Blanchard Jerrold has essayed to enlighten Midland readers, is attracting some attention in Walsall, and an effort is being made, under the auspices of Mr. Duignan, to establish an art class for the mechanics of that town.—*Birmingham Daily Post.*

An action to recover compensation for the loss of a relative was before Mr. Godson, Deputy Judge, at the Stourbridge County Court, on Friday. The mother of the Misses Hartley, dressmakers, was so injured by being run over by the defendant's (Mr. Badley) cart that she died. Plaintiffs sought to recover £35, but were non-suited.

Lieut.-Col. Wombwell inspected the Leicestershire Administrative Battalion of Rifle Volunteers on Wednesday week, on Leicester racecourse. About 550 rank and file attended. The battalion consists of one company from each of the following places:—Melton Mowbray, Belvoir, Hinckley, Lutterworth, Loughboro', and Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and of five companies from Leicester, Nos. 1, 4 A, 4 B, 5, and 9. Whilst complimenting the battalion, the inspecting officer said there was room for improvement.

Under the heading, "Spirit of the Age," the *Lincoln Standard* says:—"During the past week a neat Hansom cab has made its appearance in Lincoln, and being almost the only public conveyance in the streets, save the omnibuses, appears almost ubiquitous. Who says Lincoln is not progressing?"

The secretaries furnish the following statistics in connection with the recent show of the Leicestershire Agricultural Society, at Ashby-de-la-Zouch:—On Tuesday week there were 7,008 tickets sold, 9,500 persons entered the gates of the grounds independently of honorary members, exhibitors, employés, &c. £473 were taken at the gates alone. It is stated that 4,000 persons went to Ashby by the trains from Leicester, Derby, Nottingham, Burton, Birmingham, Nuneaton, &c.

Many people in Cheltenham will be heavy sufferers by the collapse of the European Assurance Company, the operations of the society having been of a very extended character. The district manager, Mr. Tait, has lived for some years in Cheltenham, in consequence of the increase of local business; and the general manager of the company, Mr. H. Lake, was formerly in business in Cheltenham as a newspaper proprietor.

The *Athenæum* says Lord Clarendon, the present proprietor of Kenilworth Castle, is causing works of a rather extensive nature to be executed among the ruins of that palace, with a view of preventing its further decay. These operations embrace the Great Hall, Leicester's Buildings, and portions of the external walls being reinstated rather than restored. With these works excavations have been carried on, and have revealed certain passages, cellars, and chambers, which had been concealed by the *débris* of the upper portion of the buildings.

A young man, name unknown, was crossing the Hanley line, opposite Etruria Hall, on Saturday evening, and was run over by an engine belonging to Earl Granville, and used at the adjacent ironworks. It is unusual for Earl Granville's engines to be running at night, but this was necessary on Saturday, owing to one of them having broken down in the day. The man would not, therefore, expect to see anything on this line, but as he was crossing he was knocked down, and the engine passed over him, or rather through him, for his body was almost severed in two at the loins, and his left arm, which was apparently hanging by his side, was cut through. He was of course instantly killed.

An exhibition of the works of modern artists in oil and colours was opened at the Nottingham School of Art on Monday. The pictures are on sale, and (says the local *Guardian*) considering the high merit of some of them, and the moderate prices at which they are announced, lovers of the fine arts ought not to let the opportunity pass. Apart from the advantages which the collection offers to purchasers, however, it is, merely for sight-seeing purposes, really worthy of a visit. Mr. C. W. Smith has been at great trouble to get the pictures together, and when we state that the artists include such names as McCallum, Dawson, Mrs. Robinson, Spencer Stanhope, Rankley, &c., we shall at once convey an idea of the importance of the collection. There is another attractive feature, too, in the exhibition, which consists of the fact that many of our local artists are exhibitors. The exhibition will be on view during the fair.

The Warwick Board of Guardians have held a meeting to consider a proposition introduced by the Hon. and Rev. J. W. Leigh for boarding out pauper children with cottagers in the various villages of the union, instead of maintaining and educating them in the workhouse. The proposition, which was supported by Lord Leigh, the Lord-Lieutenant of the county, gave rise to an animated discussion, and evoked considerable opposition. On the one hand it was urged that the system would save the children from the stigma of the workhouse in after life; and on the other that additional expense would be incurred, and that the children would neither be so well fed nor so well instructed as they are in the workhouse. Eventually a committee, consisting of Lord Leigh and other influential members of the Board, was appointed to institute inquiries as to the probable cost and other matters, and to report thereon at a subsequent meeting.

The gas agitation at Redditch has ended satisfactorily, a Gas Consumers' Company having been formed, and a very large number of its shares guaranteed to be taken up. The present proprietor of the gasworks, Mr. Clift, in answer to the promoters of the company, agreed to sell his works, &c., for the sum of £10,000, providing that the shares were all taken by the 29th inst.; but Mr. Clift has been induced to modify his conditions. At a meeting of the Provisional Committee, held at the Unicorn Hotel, on Saturday (at which Mr. Clift was present by invitation), that gentleman consented to the various terms of purchase suggested, extending the time for the taking up of the shares until the 25th of October next, and for the completion of the purchase of the works, &c., until the 1st of January in the ensuing year, the purchase money to be paid in four instalments at certain intervals. The company is to be started with a capital of £12,000, in £1. shares.

On Monday a boy was taken to the County Gaol at Stafford, who has displayed great precocity in prison-breaking. Hardly thirteen years old, he has thrice escaped from custody. Arrested first for a petty theft at Tipton, where his parents, of the labouring class, have lost control of him, he escaped by climbing the perpendicular side of a brick wall, 16 ft. high. At large for several days, he was again captured, still in the Black Country, and was being taken last Friday to the Petty Sessions Court, at Bilston, when he broke from the policeman who had him in charge, and it took the fellow four hours before he could retrap the quarry. Convicted by their worships on the following day, he was lodged in one of the cells. Thence, however, he escaped, by wriggling himself through the flood-wicket of his cell door, though its dimensions were not more than, perhaps, eight inches by seven. Now, in the corridor of the cells, he was soon where the roof was the sky; but, as he had not the locomotion of a bird, he had to scale one wall of nine feet and another of six feet before he had regained his liberty. This he was not long in doing, unobserved, although the hour was noon. His escape was soon ascertained; but it took four agile officers till long after the sun had gone down to take him the fourth time.

At the Walsall Board of Guardians' meeting, on Friday, the Rev. Mr. Dunn, Roman Catholic priest, Walsall, attended the meeting, in response to an invitation sent him by the Clerk, with respect to the rule prohibiting Catholic inmates of the workhouse from attending mass at any of the Catholic places of worship on Sunday mornings. Formerly the Roman Catholic inmates of the workhouse were allowed to attend the Roman Catholic chapels in the town, but it was stated that great irregularity was the result. Since that time Mr. Dunn had conducted services in the house on Sunday mornings, and the inmates were not allowed to leave the house. In answer to a Guardian, Mr. Dunn said a week day service would not suffice. It was a rule of the Catholic Church that the members of it should attend regularly, unless prevented by sickness or some other cause, the Sunday morning mass, and every true Catholic regarded it as a crime if he did not attend. The week day service was merely for the purpose of instruction. It was agreed that for the future the Catholics in the workhouse should be permitted to attend the Catholic Chapel every Sunday morning, the Chairman remarking the Board would reserve to themselves the right of punishing those persons who remained out of the workhouse longer than was necessary by stopping their going out to attend the service in future, or as long as the Board thought fit.

An unusual case came before the Droitwich magistrates last Friday, when James Hulse, of the Red Lion Inn, was charged with having, on the 15th of May last, used and mixed with fifty gallons of wort two ounces of tobacco, as a substitute for malt, contrary to the statute 5 and 6 George III., cap. 58, whereby he had incurred a penalty of £200. The case was proved by Mr. J. S. Curtis, Mr. Melhuish, Mr. J. Mountford, officers of excise, and Mr. Richard Bannister, assistant chemist to the Board of Inland Revenue, at Somerset House, who analysed a sample of spent hops seized on defendant's premises by Mr. Melhuish, and in which he found some exhausted cut tobacco. Defendant pleaded innocence of the charge, and called witnesses to prove that on the day in question there were some men bowling in his alley who were smoking, and some of them took refuge in the brewhouse from a storm then raging. The magistrates considered the case proved, and inflicted the mitigated penalty of £50, being one-fourth of the full amount; and they also wished, as defendant had been in business some years, and no complaint had been made against him, that a recommendation should go from them to the Board of Inland Revenue for a further mitigation of he penalty. Mr. Farrington (supervisor) promised that the recommendation of the Bench should be at once forwarded to the Board.

A shocking accident, resulting in the death of Mr. Hipkins, a colliery proprietor, of Dudley, and Joseph Bristowe, a miner, took place on Saturday, at the Butterfly Pit, Allbridge Colliery, Tividale, Dudley. The pit having fired a few days before, the workings were abandoned for a time, and means were taken to prevent the combustion of the coal. On Saturday Mr. Hipkins determined to ascertain whether the coal was a-light or not, and the shaft was uncovered. Bristowe was let down to the platform, and removed a portion of the rubbish, and displaced a small piece of the scaffolding. His companions at the top shouted to him after a little time, but no answer was made. Mr. Hipkins, opining that the choke-damp or a mixture of choke-damp and fire-damp had overpowered Bristowe, ordered the hanging scaffold to the surface, and then prepared to descend. His brother, who was with him, advised him to lash himself to the scaffold, and ran off for some rope, but fearing for the safety of the man below, and having great confidence in himself, Mr. Hipkins gave the word to go, and he descended the shaft. In the space of a few seconds his brother returned, and found that he was too late to carry out his preliminary measures. The men at bank called down the shaft ere the scaffold had gone ten yards, but received no reply. The engine man at once reversed, and to the horror of the party the scaffold was again empty. It was then resolved to throw a large quantity of water down the shaft to disperse the deadly gases. This was done, and when the shaft was a little less dangerous a descent was made, and the bodies of Mr. Hipkins and Bristowe recovered, but life had been extinct for some time. Mr. Hipkins had sustained a severe wound in the forehead. It is supposed that the damp which had escaped through the opening made by Bristowe had filled the shaft, and that the unfortunate proprietor of the colliery had fallen off in a second or two.

The Dudley Guardians on Friday discussed the charge made by Mr. Breakwell against Mr. Bassano, a member of the Board, to which reference was made in last week's paper. Mr. Bassano said it appeared that some person had made certain statements before the Board on the previous Friday, and had endeavoured to support his slanders by the presence of witnesses. He had read the newspaper reports, and the notes taken by Mr. Barrs, and from those he had seen the charge. He opposed the noticing of the report in the first instance, because he knew his own innocence, and knew that he was unable to perpetrate such a piece of rascality; and, further, he knew that the relief was so carefully given that no such attempt as had been imputed to him could succeed. He therefore disregarded the slanderous utterances, well knowing that the man who made them was a paid agitator, whose business it was to dupe the men by pretending to redress their wrongs. But since some Guardians and the newspapers had thought fit to magnify the slander, he was ready to meet it. Mr. Bassano then read a written statement to prove that what had been said against him was untrue, and had no foundation; and trusted the Board would exonerate him and demand an ample apology from the person who had made the statement. After a long and at times rather angry discussion, it was unanimously resolved—"That this Board, having heard the explanation of Mr. Bassano, have every confidence in that gentleman, and have not the slightest belief in the charges brought against him by Breakwell, and that this meeting sympathises with Mr. Bassano." Mr. Bagott then moved, and Mr. Hayes seconded, a resolution to the effect that Breakwell should retract the charge, and this was carried unanimously. Mr. Breakwell admitted he had been misinformed, and that he had been partly led astray.

The unanimity between the nailers and the masters does not seem to be yet complete. On Monday a nailers' meeting was held in the open space known as Porter's Field, Dudley, in order to publicly protest against certain deviations from the prices agreed upon a week or so ago by the whole of the masters. Mr. Price said he had called the meeting in consequence of some alterations being made in the price of spike nails at Sedgley, and a reduction being notified by one firm upon "thousand" nails. The respectable masters in the trade had told him they could not compete if they paid the price, and a number of other masters paid less. They had suffered sufficent lately, and it was not only by protecting their labour that they could hope to avoid such suffering. (Hear, hear.) He also said it was an abomination that masters being equal, and the men pretty well satisfied, a few selfish men, ignoring their miserable wages, should attempt further reductions. Were all the men, women, and children before him having the full prices? ("No;" and a cry, "Not at Woodall's.") The speaker regretted that the trade contained so many masters who fled one day in the face of an agreement they had signed the day before, and he advised the nailers to go without food on the Sunday rather than sell to a master who would, by his unfair conduct, bring the other masters down, and the nailers to want. (Cheers, and "We will.") It was then agreed that a union should be formed to protect the nailers not paid 20s. in the pound.—After this, Mr. Price arranged with the men to meet him privately, and form a committee, together with a treasurer and secretary.—Mr. Price then left, with the intention, as he announced, of proceeding to Sedgley and Gornal, to conduct similar meetings.

There was a meeting of miners at the Bird Show Inn, Oldbury, on Thursday se'nnight to discuss their grievances. Mr. Breakwell was the principal speaker, and commented upon several questions of interest to the meeting. From statistics recently issued he found that the average age to which miners lived was only 27 years. He deprecated the chartermaster system, and advocated the work being set down by the ton. Earl Dudley had taken a step in the right direction upon this question. He had decided after the 29th of that month not to sell 30 cwt. to the ton, as he had been in the habit of doing, but he was going to set an example worthy or imitation, by having the material weighed into the boat. Most of the employers in the district were also seriously looking at the question of wages. The present system of working the thick coal was acknowledged to be the cause of a great loss of life, which entailed suffering and privation upon families and ratepayers. Mr. Baker (Mines Inspector) had long decided that no man ought to be allowed to get the coal where he could not put up timber to make himself safe. If the system were altered, and they were allowed to get the coal in two sections, good would accrue to the proprietors and the men. Referring to the unsatisfactory manner in which the miners' field pay is handled, he suggested that an account of the field pay should be rendered annually, and that the surplus should be added to the Hartley balance, which would form a good fund for the relief of their widows and children. A resolution was passed to the effect that the meeting agreed with the proceedings taken at the recent conference at Dudley, and pledged itself to co-operate in carrying out the resolutions then and there agreed to.

On Saturday a Conference of school teachers was held at the Lecture Theatre of the Midland Institute, Birmingham, Mr. Copham presiding. The Chairman said it was intended to form an association of school teachers of all denominations, for the purpose of considering educational questions. One of the first matters to be taken up would be the proposals of the Education League. It would be necessary to consider what effect free schools, supported by local rates, would have upon the present schools, which had done a great deal of good; whether the vast amount of trouble and expense laid out upon the present schools ought to be thrown away, and whether voluntary effort would not be crushed by the local rate scheme. He was afraid also that a great many parents who now paid would refuse to do so if they could send their children to free schools. Then there was the question whether the Factory Acts could not be modified, so as to solve the educational difficulty. There was also the matter of certificated *versus* uncertificated masters, and a question of great importance was whether paths of promotion should not be opened up to certificated teachers. At present, if they wished for promotion, they must leave the profession. Some offices ought to be accessible to them; why, for example, should they not have some part in inspection? Again, there was the great question of undenominational schools—of secular *versus* religious education. Church schools should be permitted to teach Church doctrines; Dissenting schools, Dissenting doctrines; and secular schools, no doctrines at all. This would be much better than to enforce a conscience clause, which, if carried out, would do away with religious teaching in all schools.—It was resolved that an association be formed, to be called the "Birmingham and Midland Counties Society of Teachers;" that all persons shall be eligible for membership who hold certificates from the Committee of Council, who are masters or mistresses of National, British, or Denominational schools, or who are assistants recognised by the Committee of Council; and that the object of the society be to consider all questions connected with education, and, when necessary, to take united action thereon. The subscription of members was fixed at 2s. 6d. for teachers within twenty miles of Birmingham, and 1s. for teachers beyond that distance. A committee was appointed, consisting of Messrs. Beslyn, Hebrew School, Birmingham; Buckley, St. Mark's National School, Birmingham; Copham, St. John's, Ladywood; Davis, Severn-street British School; Des Landes, Oratory School, Hyde-road; Fillmore, West Bromwich British School; Hall, Dudley Wesleyan School; Hanson, Oldbury National School; Horton, National School, Wolverhampton; Marshall, National School, Dudley; Mundye, New Jerusalem School, Summer-lane; Rankilor, St. Clement's National School, Nechells; Thompson, St. George's National School; Tubb, Edgbaston National School; and Wade, Hurst-street Unitarian School. Mr. G. B. Davis and Mr. Rankilor were appointed secretaries.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

The following is a copy of a telegram forwarded by Lloyd's agent at Bordeaux at one o'clock on Wednesday morning to Mr. Stephenson, secretary of Lloyd's:—"Bordeaux, Sept. 29. —The harbour is on fire. Twenty ships are now burning. It is blowing a hurricane from the south, and now high water. Cannot at present estimate the limit of damage, as it is impossible to clear the burning vessels from the stream. The fire was caused from the ignition of a lighter loaded with petroleum."

There is great distress in the hop districts.

The Queen is still at Balmoral, in good health. The Court will return to Windsor on the first Thursday in November.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* states that all the foreign sheep arriving on Monday morning were stopped at the Thames wharves on account of disease.

The Beverley election inquiry has been adjourned until the 19th. The Norwich inquiry was resumed on Monday.

On Monday next the mansion and estate at Teddington, recently belonging to Benjamin Higgs, of the Central Gas Company, are to be sold under the bankruptcy, at the Auction Mart.

The *John Bull* states that the Bishop of Edinburgh (Dr. Terrott) has resigned his see. The election of his successor must take place within five weeks.

Two men were killed on Saturday, near Bolton, when going down a shaft. The engine "ran away," and the men were precipitated to the bottom of the pit, about 100 yards.

Clara Smart, aged 19, of Camden Town, has died from "effusion of blood on the brain, caused by fatty heart, accelerated by compression of the chest produced by tight lacing."

A train of four carriages turned over between Bradford and Huddersfield on Monday, and upset fifty passengers. The carriages were smashed, but no person was injured beyond a few bruises and a severe shaking.

The *Times*' Liverpool correspondent states that Mr. William Jackson, of Birkenhead, and formerly member for North Devonshire, and Mr. Hardman Earle, of Allerton Towers, near Liverpool, have accepted baronetcies.

A little girl was riding with her father and brother on a three-wheel velocipede, near Kelvin University, on Thursday night, when the velocipede swerved and ran into the river. The father and son were rescued, but the daughter was unhappily drowned.

Mr. Heddle, of Melsetter, was shooting, at Orkney, with his son, on Friday, and the dog having tripped the latter, his gun went off, and the contents lodged in his father, who was instantly killed. Mr. Heddle was in the prime of life, and has left a family.

At an open-air Republican meeting at Tarragona a few days ago, Don Raimund de los Reyes, secretary to the Governor of Tarragona, but acting temporarily as Governor, on proceeding to remonstrate against the violent language of some of the speakers, was murdered in the crowd.

At Wandsworth-road station, on Friday, a railway policeman, while crossing the line, was knocked down and killed by a train. On Saturday, a workman crossing the rails at Stewart's-lane Junction, to get to the London, Chatham, and Dover engine-sheds, was cut in two by a passing engine.

The funeral of the Bishop of Exeter took place on Friday, at St. Mary's Church. The Rev. Mr. Fearon, the vicar of the parish, conducted the service; a choir chanted the Psalms both in the church and around the grave, into which each of the choristers dropped a small white bouquet. Exeter Cathedral was on Sunday draped in black.

The Prince of Wales has intimated his intention of discontinuing to keep the splendid pack of royal harriers which have for years afforded so much sport to the residents and agriculturists in the Windsor district, as well as the illustrious visitors who have from time to time been the guests of her Majesty at Windsor Castle.

On Saturday evening Mrs. Howe, the wife of a Wakefield hotel-keeper, was hurrying along the platform of the Mirfield Railway Station in the West Riding, with a child in her arms, and, in consequence of someone treading on her dress, she stumbled and fell. The child fell out of her arms, rolled off the platform, and was cut to pieces beneath the wheels of an advancing train.

A workman of Chateau-Thierry (Aisne), aged 40, last week attempted, while labouring under a religious monomania, to crucify himself. He was found lying in a garret with his feet and one hand nailed to a cross, which he had made with some old rafters. He had also pierced the other hand, but was of course unable to entirely carry out his intention. He is likely to recover.

By order of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, three of her Majesty's ships—viz., the screw sloop *Falcon*, the screw gun-vessel *Landrail*, and the paddle steam vessel *Recruit*—have been at Lloyd's Captains' Room, Royal Exchange. There was a large attendance of shipowners and others. The *Falcon* fetched £2,200, the *Landrail* £1,325, and the *Recruit* was bought in for £2,000.

According to the *New York Times* it is no longer a State secret that Mr. Motley has been instructed to notify Lord Clarendon that whenever it is thought best to renew negotiations for a settlement of the Alabama claims, it will be done at Washington. It is not probable that Mr. Motley, up to this time, has been encouraged to expect any more acceptable terms than those previously offered by Mr. Gladstone.

Monday's papers contained reports of three murders. On Sunday Charles Martin, a shoemaker, almost severed the head from the body of a young woman named Johnson, with whom he had had words. On the previous day, Henry Whittle, a weaver, of Westhaughton, near Bolton, murdered his daughter-in-law, and then cut his own throat; and on the same day William Smith was committed for trial for murdering his wife at Brentford—a sickening catalogue.

The Emperor Napoleon presided at the Council of Ministers, held on Saturday. His Majesty is now in excellent health. The preparations for the journey of the Empress to Constantinople continue, and it is stated that her Majesty will leave on Saturday (to day.) The rumours that the Emperor will proceed to Vichy and Biarritz are entirely devoid of foundation. It is said that the cost of the Emperor's journey will be £24,000.

A young lady, about 28 years of age, named Clarke, who is on a visit at the house of Mr. Drake, supervisor, of Hartlepool, since Tuesday, the 14th ult., has been in a condition of overpowering sleep. Slight paralytic symptoms have been visible—hence the only ground for fearing for the ultimate issue of the case, which it is needless to add excites great interest among the medical profession, and not a little among the public generally.

Mrs. Burton, who died recently at Roundhay, near Leeds, has left some munificent bequests for charitable purposes. The total amount of her benefactions exceeds £60,000, of which £15,000 is to be devoted to the erection of Wesleyan chapels and schools in Cumberland and Scotland. The Wesleyan Home Missions, the Bible Society, and the Leeds Infirmary each receive £2,000, and half that sum is left to each of the following institutions—Woodhouse Grove School, Kingswood School, the Leeds Dispensary, and the Leeds House of Recovery.

Nineteen French sailors had a narrow escape on Thursday. They were aboard the lugger *St. Marie*, of Boulogne, which was run into by a steamer. The lugger foundered. About 17 of the crew, with great difficulty, managed to scramble on board the steamer, but two fine lads were left in their berths on board the sinking vessel. The Italian captain for some time refused to launch a boat, but was eventually induced to do so by her English engineers serving on board the *St. Quinton*, and the two lads left in the lugger were happily saved.

A whole family have narrowly escaped death by poison at Bow, London. Harriet Humphrys, the wife of a dog fancier, made a pudding, a portion of which she gave to her three children, and ate some of it herself. Almost immediately the whole four were seized with violent pains, and a dog that drank the water in which the pudding had been boiled died in a few minutes. Medical assistance was procured, and two of the children were found to be in such a dangerous condition that it was deemed necessary at once to remove them to the infirmary. The mother and eldest girl seemed after a time to be in a fair way of recovery. It appears that the woman had inadvertently used some corrosive sublimate with the flour in making the pudding.

A daring theft has just been committed on the Boulevard Malesherbes, at one of the branch offices of the Société Générale, a credit establishment for promoting commerce and industry. Every evening the receipts of the day are taken to the head office by one of the *employés*. Upon arriving there he opened his portfolio, and lo! only £20 remained there out of £5,000. He rushed back, thinking he must have left the bank-notes on his table, but found them not. Then he suddenly recollected that he had left the portfolio for one minute while going down to the cellar before quitting the office. One of the clerks, who is strongly suspected, has disappeared, and up to the present time the police have failed in tracing him.

The mystery attendant upon the disappearance of the late Lord Justice Clerk has been cleared up by the discovery of his body on Friday. On Tuesday afternoon, just above the Spout of Buchanty, a razor case and neckerchief, the property of the judge, were found; and on Wednesday forenoon marks of blood were discovered on an ash sapling not far distant. A branch immediately overhanging the fall appeared to have been grasped by some one while in the act of falling backward into the river. Although the search was renewed about that part of the stream, yet the depths of the pools baffled the skill of the searchers until Friday. At last his lordship's body was brought to the surface, from a pool about twenty feet deep, close to the Spout of Buchanty. His throat was cut; and there is little doubt he died by his own hand.

A singular discovery has been made by some Indian fishermen. Among the vessels lost in the memorable cyclone that swept over the Bay of Bengal in 1867 were the steamer *Thunderer* and the ship *Morayshire*, Search was professed to be made for these and other missing vessels among the Sunderbunds, but no traces of them were discovered, and it was taken for granted that both had gone down at sea. The *Liverpool Courier* says that the other day a party of fishermen, driven for shelter in an out-of-the-way creek, some miles inland, stumbled upon the hull of a ship, which proved to be the *Morayshire*, and further on found a steamer with masts and funnels still standing, which answered the description of the *Thunderer*. The steamer had £150,000 on board, which is doubtless in her bullion hold. As to the fate of her crew, painful speculations are of course called up, as the place is infested with tigers.

There was an imposing Fenian demonstration in Cork on Sunday, to demand the release of the Fenian convicts. Vast bodies paraded the city in military array, dressed in green sashes and rosettes. They marched in thirteen brigades, preceded by thirteen bands of music, and twenty-nine banners, through the streets of the city to the park, where the meeting was held. The resolutions and speeches were of the usual violent character. The Orangemen of Belfast are preparing for a "grand demonstration" on the 5th of November in that town. It is not, however, to take any processional form, or to be an out-of-doors display. The Premier has sent a reply to the memorial addressed to the Queen on the subject of the release of the Fenian prisoners from a large number of the members of the Irish Total Abstinence Society. The reply says that, although Mr. Gladstone can in no way pledge the Government to any particular course, he feels bound in justice to render his testimony to the loyal and becoming terms in which the memorialists approach the Throne, and the soundness of judgment which they exhibit in attaching its true character to the offences unhappily committed by the persons now in confinement.

An insurrection has broken out at Barcelona in consequence of the resolution to disarm some Volunteer battalions, whose commanders had protested against the arrest of General Pierrad and the disarmament of the Tarragona Volunteers. Severe fighting occurred from 10 o'clock on Saturday night, the Volunteers having formed barricades. The troops carried them and all the other positions by 2 o'clock on Sunday morning, and the movement is reported to be repressed; many were killed and wounded. Seventy prisoners have been sent on board vessels, including the Republican Deputies Serraclara and Salvany, who, having unsuccessfully tried to induce the Governor not to disarm the Volunteers, had taken sides with the rebels. The Republican papers say that at Tarragona the Governor's secretary was killed, in consequence of menacing General Pierrad with a revolver.

A petition to the Prime Minister, praying that steps may be taken for the disestablishment and disendowment of the Established Church in Wales, is being numerously signed in various parts of the Principality. The memorialists state that, of the present four bishops, one—the bishop of St. Asaph—is wholly ignorant of the Welsh tongue, and has never been able in such tongue to discharge any function, priestly or episcopal, towards the souls of the Welsh people, and that, nevertheless, he has received, since his appointment, above £90,000 sterling, in addition to patronage exceeding that vested in the four English bishoprics of Carlisle, Hereford, Lichfield, and Chichester. The petitioners say another of their bishops is a Scotchman, and that since the accession of the Hanoverian family no Welshman has ever been advanced to a bishopric in his native land.

Meetings in *re* the European Assurance Society have been held at several places this week. The policy-holders of the society met on Monday in Manchester, to confer with the local agent upon the position of the society's affairs. Dr. Watts, the agent, admitted that for some years past he had had a growing knowledge of the state of the company's affairs, and had been working hard to bring about a better state of things. He made a candid statement of the knowledge he possessed. He believed that by a change of management from £30,000 to £35,000 a year could be saved in managing expenses alone, and there was no need to go into liquidation. After some discussion the meeting was adjourned for a week. A meeting of shareholders was held the same day in London; Sir Frederick Smith, K.H., in the chair, when after full explanations from Sir Frederick Smith and Mr. H. B. Parminter, the accountant, resolutions were passed, declaring that winding up was unnecessary, and urging the directors to oppose the petition by every means in their power. Mr. Lake, the manager, denies that it is necessary to wind up the company.

At Marlborough-street Police-court on Saturday, before Mr. Knox, the sitting magistrate, ten of the directors of the Albert Life Assurance Company appeared, in obedience to summonses obtained at the instance of Mr. Lee, a shareholder, charging them with fraud. The names of the defendants summoned are Mr. William Beattie, M.D., 13, Upper Berkeley-street; Mr. Peter Hood, M.D., 15, Lower Seymour-street, Portman-square, and Upton House, Watford, Herts; Mr. Jasper Wilson Johns, 46, Cumberland-street, Hyde Park, and Rhilwport, Montgomeryshire; Mr. Edward Vansittart Neale, M.A., Oriel College, Oxford, and Lincoln's Inn, and West Wickham, Kent; Dr. James Nichols, M.R.C.P., 13, Savile-row, Burlington-gardens; Vice-Admiral the Right Hon. Lord George Paulet, C.B., 11, Victoria-road, St. John's-wood; Mr. William Page Thomas Phillips, 11, King's Bench-walk, Temple, and 77, Gloucester-place, Portman-square; Dr. Thomas Stevenson, L.R.C.P., F.S.A., 37, Upper Grosvenor-street, and Iver-heath, Bucks; Mr. Robert Whitworth, 5, Old-square, Lincoln's Inn; and Mr. A. R. Kirby. All the defendants attended. The prosecution was instituted by Mr. Edward Lee, law student, of 55, Lancaster-road, Notting-hill, and others, and was conducted by Mr. Straight and Mr. Bromby, instructed by Mr. J. Murray, of Great St. Helen's. Mr. Poland, instructed by Messrs. Freshfield, was counsel for all the defendants, except Messrs. Whitworth, Kirby, Nichols, and Johns; Mr. Metcalfe appeared for Mr. Whitworth, Mr. Besley for Mr. Kirby, and Mr. Pawle for Dr. Nichols. Mr. Johns was not represented by counsel. Mr. Straight, in stating the grounds upon which he had to proceed, went into a history of the formation and affairs of the company, which, started in 1838, under the title of the Freemasons' and General Life Assurance, Loan, Annuity, and Reversionary Interest Company, did not assume its present title of the Albert Assurance Company until 1863, when it had an original capital of £500,000, in 25,000 shares of £20 each. Between 1859 and 1861 a profit was made amounting to £33,350 14s. 9d. In the latter year £22,650 was paid for the Family Endowment Life Assurance Annuity Society, but in all £274,152 was from time to time paid by this company for amalgamation with other offices. From 1862 to 1866 a loss was made of £281,702. During that period an amalgamation had taken place with the Kent Mutual Assurance Society, for which £15,528 was given; with the Western Life Assurance Society, for which £75,616 was given; and with the Indian Laudable, for which £972 was given. That would bring the affairs down to 1866, during which period of four years a loss of £281,702 was made. From 1866 to 1868 was a period of great importance. He was in a position to state that the losses made amounted to £1,036,630. It was exceedingly strange that the directors should still have gone on issuing shares or allowing transfers, when it must have been obvious that the company had been in a state of insolvency for a considerable time past. It certainly did appear that most of them had been in the habit of attending the meetings, because he found the directors' fees amounted to £4,220 during 1868, and the medical officers' fees to £2,528. Mr. Edward Lee, the prosecutor, was examined, and detailed the manner in which he came to purchase shares in the company. He had bought up shares at 5s. 6d.; £3 was paid up on them. He expected to get 5 per cent. on £1,000 for his investment of £100; he had not the means of paying his liability on those shares. The examination of Mrs. Price, accountant, who had gone through the books, was begun, and the case was adjourned for three weeks, the defendants being bound over in their own recognisances of £13 each to appear.

FEARFUL TRAGEDY IN FRANCE.

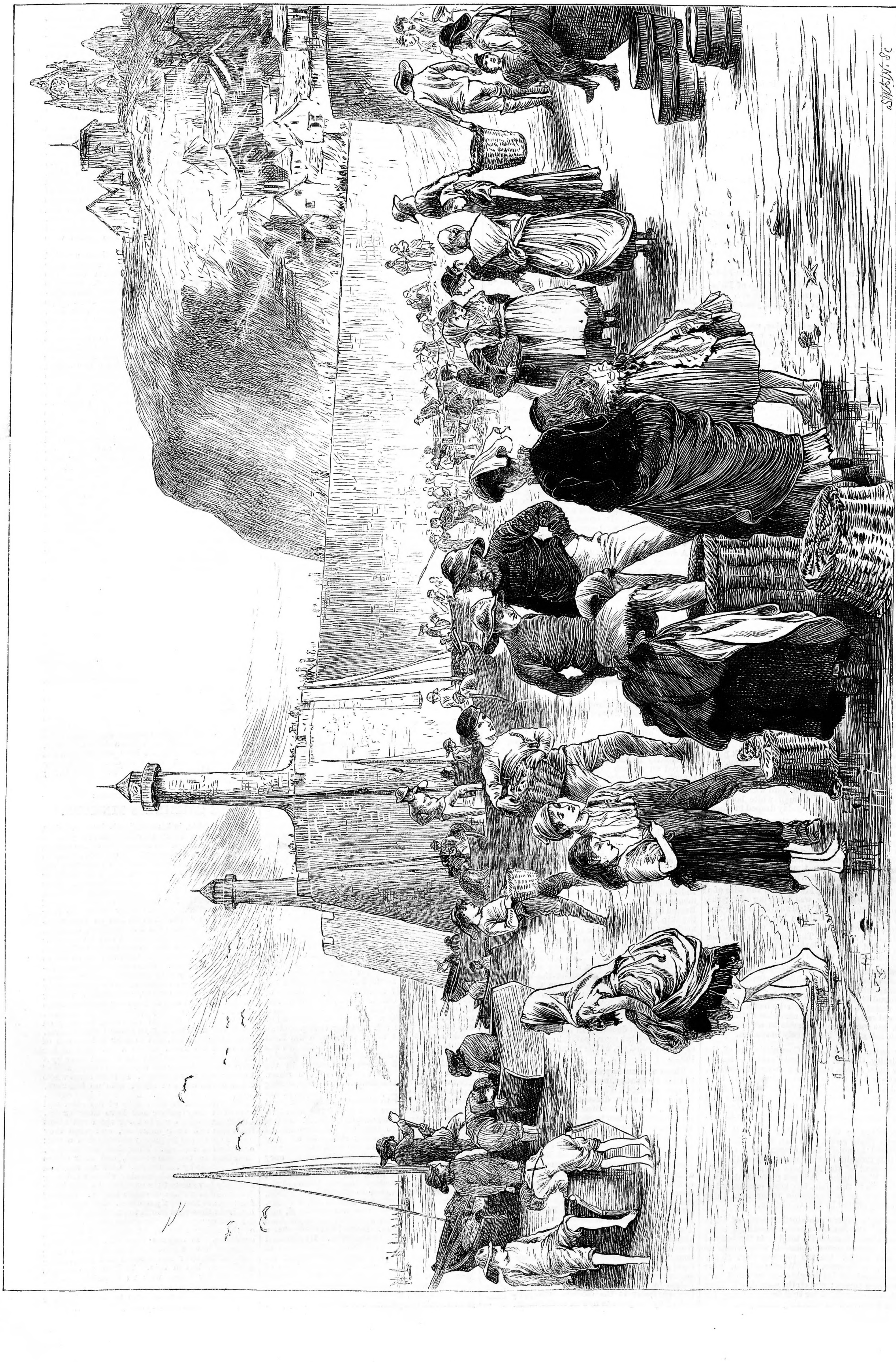
A more horrible crime than that which has just been discovered at Pantin, near Paris, has rarely been reported. A labourer, on entering his field, distant about 150 yards from the railway station, observed part of a blood-stained pocket-handkerchief issuing from the ground, which in that place had evidently been disturbed, and was all around reddened. The earth having been removed, was founnd to conceal the bodies of six persons, all of whom had been murdered only a few hours before. They consisted of a woman of about 45, respectably dressed, and wearing gold earrings and watch and chain, besides having a sum of about 10f. in her pocket; a young woman of 18, a youth of 16, and three children aged about 12, 10, and 5 respectively. The wounds which had occasioned the death of the mother of the others had been inflicted with a hatchet or some similar heavy cutting instrument, while the rest had been repeatedly stabbed with a knife. The younger children still convulsively clasped in their hands rolls and sausages which they had been eating when attacked. The young man was literally pierced all over with wounds, and had evidently struggled hard to defend the family. Enquiries since made show the murdered persons to be a family named Kinck. The bodies were removed to the Morgue.

A man named Traupmann has been arrested on the strong supposition that he is the murderer of the Kinck family. Traupmann (says the *Telegraph*) was thus arrested:—A maritime gendarme at Havre overheard Traupmann inquiring about a passage to New York. The gendarme entered into conversation with him, and, finding that he had no proper passports, was conveying him to the Prefecture for inquiries. On the way, the fellow answered to the officer's questions, that he was a mechanic of Roubaix, just come in from Paris. "*From Pantin, you mean*," the gendarme said, making a fine official thrust at random. The man turned deadly white and, dashing behind a passing cabriolet, threw himself over the bridge into the dock. He was saved with great difficulty; and when they examined his clothes, title-deeds and papers were discovered belonging to Jean Kinck, the father of the murdered family. Furthermore, Traupmann was identified as the individual who had called, under the name of Kinck, at the Hôtel du Chemin de Fer du Nord; and various other facts being pressed against him, the prisoner at last made a confession—which was to the effect, that Jean Kinck and Gustave, his eldest son, murdered the woman and children, with Traupmann's assistance, in vengeance for the wife's infidelity. He described to the authorities the details of the conspiracy, declaring that the death-blows were not inflicted by himself—his part in the affair being merely to bring the victims by cab to the lonely spot, and help to inter them. He took the name of Jean Kinck, he says, by arrangement, and he "did not know where the father and son were now, but would like to have them found, as it would show he was only an assistant in the crime." Having given that information, the prisoner was taken to the Morgue, where he coolly identified one by one the victims; and the account ends characteristically, by the statement that the prisoner, who is closely watched, "sobs bitterly, not through fear of the scaffold, but from the remembrance of his old mother, whom, he says, his dishonour will kill."

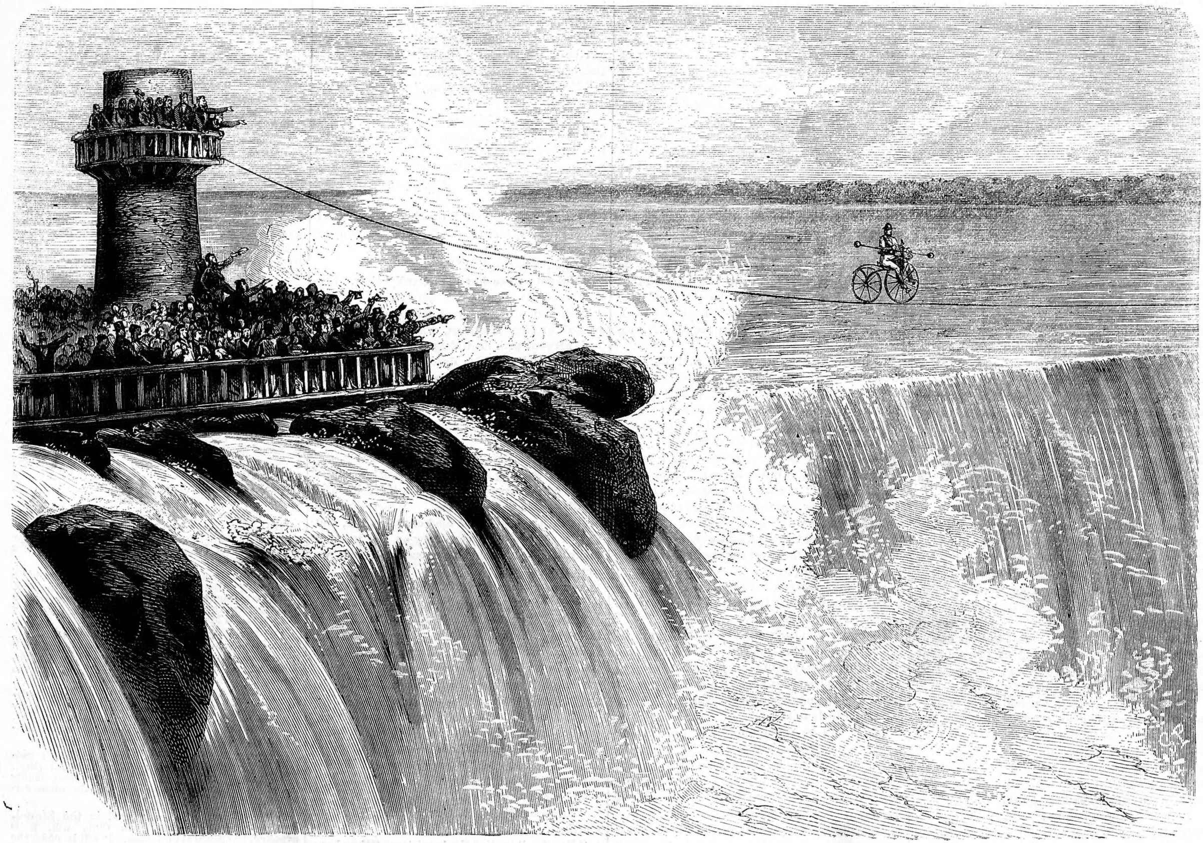
Since the above was written it is reported that they have found the body of Gustave Kinck, the son, with a knife still fixed in his throat; and it is announced that the corpse of the father has been also discovered. Should these statements prove correct, the horror of the story will have grown to the utmost possible dimensions; we shall have to face the fact that a father, mother, and six children have all been assassinated, not by means of poison or any hidden death, but by violent and butcherly blows—the shambles being a field on the outskirts of Paris.

THE CAITHNESS TINKERS.

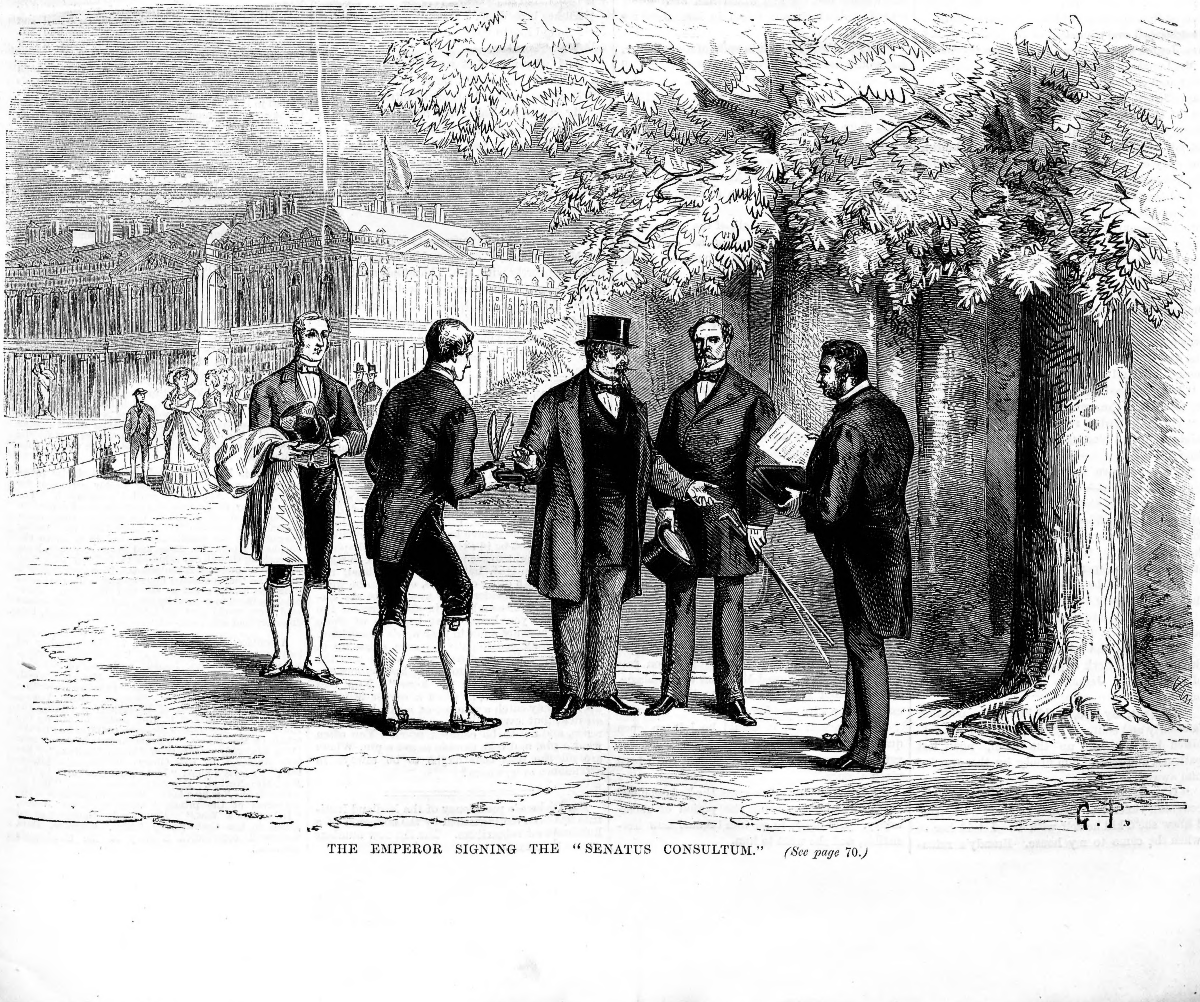
Mr. J. Makie, in his evidence before the Select Committee on Poor Law (Scotland), gives a startling account of the mode of life of the tinkers of Caithness, who appear to be only one remove from savages. He says that as a race they are in all respects different from, and have little or nothing in common with, the inhabitants. They live entirely by themselves, intermarry with each other, and in their general habits and modes of life are peculiar. About twenty years ago they numbered only from 12 to 15, and as they wandered about through the five northern counties, generally living in the open air, and bivouacking for a few days at a time by the borders of a moss or moor, their influence for evil was not so felt as to attract attention. Since then they have increased so rapidly as to render division necessary, and now there are hordes of them permanently attached to each county, occasionally visiting one another, but claiming as their residence those localities where they generally congregate. There are two colonies of them, residing on either side of Wick Bay, in natural rocky caves, looking into the sea, and so near it that one of the tribe, a woman, within a few days of her confinement, was not long ago washed away by a wave while entering the cave on the south side of the bay, and was drowned. In these caves whole families live, day and night, with no furniture, no bedding, no privacy. They herd like cattle. A fire is kindled in the centre of the cave, and around it they gather and have their orgies. Children without a rag to cover them run about the caves and their entrances, and when they come to town are frequently enveloped in a sack or a piece of sailcloth. Their chairs are boulders, their beds are the bare ground, and their dishes are tins made by themselves. Children are born there frequently, and morning visitors entering suddenly have more than once found adults lying drunk and in a state of entire nudity. Girls of fourteen are frequently mothers. Not one of the hundreds that thus live in the northern counties can read or write, and the entire social condition of the tinker tribe is of the most degraded character. It appears from Mr. Mackie that attempts have repeatedly been made to bring them within the range of social and humanising appliances, but in vain. Tinkers' missionaries laboured for years, with no favourable result. Numerous ladies devoted themselves (and it required no ordinary courage to do so) to their benefit, but without the least good result.



BRINGING IN THE HERRINGS AT WHITBY.—*BY T. GREEN.* *(See page 72.)*



CROSSING NIAGARA ON A VELOCIPEDE. *(See page 72.)*



THE EMPEROR SIGNING THE "SENATUS CONSULTUM." *(See page 70.)*

EFFIE.

A STORY IN THREE PARTS.

BY WALTER MAYNARD.

PART II. (*Continued.*)

Effie knew not what to do, and was guided by Miss Collings; her advice had been biassed by the insinuations of Mr. Langley, who insisted upon the poisoning being explained before he could rest.

"When that is done—the marks of violence still remain, and those are stubborn signs," he argued; declaring in the same breath that he was most anxious to exonerate Mr. Thornton from any evil object in his last visit to Mrs. Jenner.

The time that elapsed before the inquest was a time of intense mental agony to Arthur Thornton. A man of the most acute sense of honour, the shadow of suspicion he now felt to be upon him was intolerable. It was in vain that Mr. Burt assured him that the truth would prevail; he shrunk from the investigation as though its result would be adverse to him.

"You will be accpted by Effie if you make her another offer," he said ironically to his friend.

"You do her injustice," replied the barrister, with warmth. "Miss Jenner just now is under the influence of others; when she comes to think for herself, and knows the truth, she will act differently. No one admires her more than I do, and it is my respect for both of you that urges me to see you through this unfortunate affair, and I will do so."

At Coombe Lodge the disaster was severely felt. The breath of slander had never sullied the reputation of any member of the Thornton family. Although in a measure socially an intriguing diplomatist, Mrs. Thornton had never imperilled her good name nor that of any one connected with her. She felt that such an event as that which had happened must to some extent injure her son. She shuddered at the thought of the notoriety he would acquire; the question of his guilt never once occurred to her.

The day of the inquest arrived. The inquiry was held as privately as possible in the dining room of the house in Eaton Place. The luxuriously furnished apartment was cleared and arranged for the reception of the judicial court, which afforded a dark contrast to the gay scene usually presented round the hospitable board.

Arthur Thornton had passed much of the intervening time in company with William Jenner, who was anxious to show faith in the innocence of his friend.

The investigation commenced. Thornton was called as the principal witness—the last who had seen Mrs. Jenner alive. He gave his evidence clearly and satisfactorily, answering the questions of the coroner and jury readily and frankly. He described every incident of the interview and Mrs. Jenner's temporary absence from the room.

Mr. Langley described the condition in which he had found the body of the deceased lady when he was called in, and how Mr. Thornton was then out of the way. The presence of poison was affirmed, but how it had been administered had not yet been discovered. Until this was known the gravest imputation rested upon Thornton. Mr. Cole considerably interfered with the solemnity of the proceedings, by pushing himself forward and insisting upon being examined. His wife endeavoured to restrain him, but was angrily repulsed. His bearing and appearance were at variance with the formal character of those around.

"Let me speak," he said loudly. "I know more about it than any of them."

"Who is this?" asked the coroner, a stately personage, in white neckcloth and clerical attire. The question being answered, Mr. Cole was requested to stand up.

"The deceased lady was your daughter, we are told," said the coroner.

"Yes, my lord," replied Mr. Cole, trying vainly to bury a hiccough in his pocket handkerchief.

"Can you give us any explanation of the deplorable act which caused her death?"

"No, my lord—that is to say," continued the witness in a confidential manner, "I could to you in private," saying which he walked round the table where the jury were sitting, and attempted to whisper to the coroner.

"This cannot be allowed, Mr. Cole!" exclaimed the stately official.

"Brandy, my lord," said Mr. Cole, hoarsely, behind his hand.

"What says the witness?" inquired one of the jury. The clerk explained that it was implied that Mrs. Jenner's death was caused by brandy.

"That's it, my lord," said Mr. Cole, nodding familiarly and smiling. Mrs. Cole, who had followed her husband up the room, now lost patience, and seizing him firmly by the arm led him away.

"It's all right, my lord," he continued, hiccoughing violently, "you'll see—it's quite true. I knew she'd kill herself with it. I told her so when she came to my house. Brandy's ruination." He was then conducted into the hall, out of the hearing of the coroner and jury.

Mr. Langley was at his own request recalled, He drew attention to the different points which were yet unsolved, and ended a long rambling statement with an accusation of the crime of murder. The accused was obviously Arthur Thornton, although he was not mentioned by name. His engagement with Effie Jenner was alluded to—his knowledge of the large amount of property coming to her on the death of her stepmother, the evident interest he had in the demise of the deceased lady, the violence she had sustained at the hands of the person who was with her last, and finally his leaving the house after the occurrence. The charge, without the poisoning being explained, was almost unanswerable. Mr. Burt looked grave, and appealed to the coroner to adjourn the inquiry. In this he was opposed by Mr. Langley, who contended that all the evidence that could be produced was already before the jury. Mr. Burt persisted, and his application, after some remarks from a juryman, was complied with.

"I feel like a convicted felon," said Thornton to Mr. Burt after the meeting had dispersed.

"You shall not do so if I can help it," replied the barrister; cheer up. We must set to work to find the bottle which contained the poison."

"If it exists," answered Thornton.

"It does, and has been overlooked, take my word for it." The other appeared incredulous and hopeless. Long after the coroner had taken his leave small groups were collected in the dining room, discussing the evidence that had been given. Many of those present were in favour of Thornton's innocence, others shook their heads and expressed suspicion. The different points in the case were spoken of over and over again; the more arguments used the more difficult seemed a solution of the momentous question.

Thornton, who had remained with the rest in the room where the inquiry had taken place, with a lingering reluctance to leave the scene of so much perplexity, at length announced his intention of going home. Mr. Burt refused to allow him to do so alone.

"You will be miserable if left to yourself; come with me." Thornton declined, saying he had some writing to do, and in that manner should occupy himself during the evening. He had his way; and, worn out by the anxieties of the day, went to his rooms. He there spent some hours writing a long letter to Effie. He told her how anxiously the days had passed since their separation, gave a history of his going in search of her, and every detail of the tragical event. He implored her to refrain from judging him wrongly, and ended by quoting the letter he had written her, the first which had been intercepted, and which was found in Mrs. Jenner's possession.

"As I had faith in you in spite of all calumny, and would not believe in your guilt until confessed by your own lips; so have faith in me until this cloud passes away." Thus he wrote. Until she received his letter Effie was still ignorant of the cause of Thornton's treatment of her. She had been told of some of their correspondence having been found in the possession of her stepmother, but how it came there she knew not. No disclosure had been made by the servant in whom Mrs. Jenner had confided.

The event was now the talk of the town.

Nothing travels so rapidly as slanderous rumour. It goes faster from mouth to mouth than along the wires of the telegraph, and when it affects the reputation of any respectable member of the community it goes at a more rapid pace. The reports about Arthur Thornton were innumerable. Had he been found guilty of the murder of Mrs. Jenner less would perhaps have been said of him. As it was, every one had a theory as to how the crime had been committed. The victim had been suffocated by a pocket handkerchief saturated with chloroform—that was proved beyond a doubt by the violence that had been used. The poison had been administered by a tube forced down the throat, as would have been seen, had that part of the body been properly examined; one or more of the servants were implicated; Arthur Thornton had bribed them with cash and promises of future incomes, if their vile scheme succeeded. Hundreds of such elucidations of the sad affair were given; few exculpated Thornton; so much more excitement was found in accusing him and theorising on the mode of action he had adopted than in believing him guiltless.

Mrs. Thornton's indignation was unbounded when the result of the first investigation was made known. She vowed Mr. Burt was to blame, and regretted that she had not been able to examine the witnesses herself.

"It is monstrous it should be left an open question," she exclaimed; "there can be but one verdict pronounced, and that should have been given at once."

At Arthur Thornton's request she had remained at Coombe Lodge during the period of uncertainty. Her desire to see him became now irresistible, and she went to him.

Their meeting was painful.

"You know I am innocent," he said, embracing her.

"Who dares say otherwise?" she cried.

"I cannot avoid suspicion until more evidence can be obtained," he replied. "My good and staunch friend Burt is working hard for me."

"He might have done more," remarked Mrs. Thornton.

"Impossible; and if you knew all you would admire his disinterestedness and be grateful to him, as I am."

"I am not quite so enthusiastic in his favour, but will say no more. Have you seen Effie Jenner?"

"No; I wrote her all I could, and explained our separation, the cause of which is now so evident."

"And she has replied?"

"Not yet; there has been hardly time. She only received my letter this morning."

Then the whole story of the occurrence was related to Mrs. Thornton, who listened to her son's account with breathless attention.

"An awfully sudden death. She must have taken the poison before your arrival," she remarked.

"Or during her absence from the room," replied Thornton, "although she was not gone a moment."

"What provocation had you given her?"

"None to bring about such a horrible deed."

"You never encouraged her affection for you?"

"Never since she married. When she was Nelly Cole we used to be fond of each other, but I never suspected any constancy on her part. I thought our courtship at an end, and that we were the best of friends."

A servant announced Mr. Burt, who on entering was cordially received by Thornton.

"My mother," he said, taking the barrister up to the lady. Mrs. Thornton held out her hand.

"You have been kind to Arthur, and I thank you from my heart," she said.

"I wish I could be of more service to him," he replied; "but there is no reason to be anxious on his account." His meaning was understood without further allusion being made to any doubt as to Arthur Thornton's share in the tragedy. Mr. Burt discussed the proceedings at the inquest, and related to Mrs. Thornton all that had been done.

"Are you satisfied that every room has been searched?" she asked.

"Positive," replied the barrister; "they have even gone so far as to take up the carpet and remove the curtains in the boudoir."

"But have other parts of the house been examined? And the unfortunate woman's dress, was that taken to pieces?"

"All has been done, I think," was the reply.

"I should like to go through the house myself," said Mrs. Thornton.

"And why not, if it would afford you any satisfaction?" asked Mr. Burt.

"It would perhaps be thought intrusive."

"By whom?" said the barrister. I can answer for William Jenner not objecting. Even if anyone did, if you think you can by any means throw a light on the sad affair you are justified in taking any steps to do so."

"You really think so?" replied Mrs. Thornton, hesitatingly.

"Certainly."

"Would you accompany me to Eaton-place?"

"Most willingly," exclaimed Mr. Burt, sympathising sincerely with Mrs. Thornton's anxiety to aid her son. The two ardent well-wishers left Arthur Thornton to his own dismal reflections while they went to do their utmost to relieve the terrible suspense which tortured him.

(To be concluded in our next.)

PINS.—Numbers of people have entirely bewildered and stupified themselves in endeavours to arrive at some rational conclusion on the subject of pins. The statistical accounts of the number of pins turned out annually at Birmingham and Sheffield alone would lead one to expect that the earth itself would present the appearance of a vast pincushion. Where are those pins of which the yearly fabrication is on so vast a scale? Pins are not consumed as an article of diet. Pins do not evaporate. Pins must be somewhere. All the pins which have been made since civilization set in must be in existence in some shape or other; we ought to see nothing else, look in what direction we might, but pins. This island, not to meddle with other countries, ought to be knee deep in pins. Reader, how many pins are imported into your own house in the course of the year? Do you know what becomes of those pins? There are a few in your wife's pincushion, and one may occasionally be seen gleaming in the housemaid's waistband; but where are the rest? It is perfectly astounding how seldom one encounters a pin "on the loose." Now and then, by rare chance, as when a carpet is taken up, you may catch a glimpse of a pin lying in a crevice; but even this is an uncommon occurrence, and not to be counted upon. You often want a pin, and take trouble to get a pin. Where are all the pins that ought to be always in attendance everywhere?

Mr. Dickens's presidency of the Midland Institute has been distinguished by the accession of a hundred new subscribers. The list now numbers over a thousand.

THE GOSSIP.

Mr. Wilkie Collins, after a long rest, is engaged on a story for a magazine.

Mr. Grove, we are told, has just undertaken the editorship of *Macmillan's Magazine*

The first part of the Roxburghe Ballads, for the Ballad Society, is at press.

Mr. Boucicault is suffering from low nervous fever at Brighton.

A work from the pen of Garibaldi, to be entitled "Rome in the Nineteenth Century," is expected.

"Blow for Blow," "Dreams," and "Formosa" are being played in New York.

The Welsh Literary and Musical Society has arranged for an eisteddfod to be held at Bristol during the coming winter.

Mr. Robertson's new play "Progress," adapted from M. Sardon's "Les Garraches," is by no means so great a success as his former works.

Mdlle. Christine Nillson, the Swedish vocalist, receives £8,000 for her present two months' engagement in England, all her expenses being paid.

Yet another opera on the subject of Alessandro Stradella! The latest setting is by Signor Francesco Garzilli, and has just been published at Naples.

At the first representation of *La Petite Fadette*, Mdme. Galli-Marié fainted away from excitement during the performance.

It is said that a statement in Lord Byron's handwriting will shortly be published, which will settle the question which has lately been raised in the papers relative to Lord and Lady Byron.

The "Bibliothèque Internationale Universelle" has been started by a literary society in Paris. Their object is to publish all the known masterpieces of literature of all nations.

One of the foreign musical papers informs its readers that Monsieur Pearson's *(sic)* oratorio of "Hezekiah," (which of course was also misspelt) was performed at the festival of Norwick (!)

Mr. Charles Dickens is taking an active interest in the preparation of "David Copperfield," at the Olympic Theatre. Mr. S. Emery has been engaged for the character of *Peggotty*, and Miss Patti Josephs for that of *Emily*.

The special correspondents who are to chronicle the opening of the Suez Canal are beginning to think about preparing themselves for their trip. Dr. Russell is to represent the *Times*, Mr. Edward Dicey the *Daily Telegraph*, and Mr. Henley the *Standard*.

The Prince of Wales met Offenbach, the composer, walking "under his inseparable Tyrolian hat," the other day at Baden, and, after introducing himself, presented the author of "The Brigands" to the Princess.

The *Gaiety Gazette*, which will be shortly published, will number amongst its artistic and literary contributors Mr. G. A. Sala, Mr. H. Thompson, Mr. John Oxenford, Mr. T. W. Robertson, Mr. Dion Boucicault, Mr. John Hollingshead, &c.

The exhibition of some of Gustave Doré's pictures in New York has excited the praise of the critics. "Jephtha's Daughter" is, perhaps, the most highly esteemed, and a wish is expressed that the whole collection may be retained in America.

The new theatre to be erected in the Strand, on the site of the Bentinck Club, will, it is expected, be opened at Christmas. It will be under the management of Miss M. Oliver, now of the New Royalty.

At the Dresden Summer Theatre "La Vie Parisienne" has been played, the *cancan* being danced by a woman, in a manner that kept the house in mute horror. The spectators seem to have been too much astonished even to hiss.

Among the novelties promised at the Gaiety are a new four-act drama, by Mr. John Oxenford and Mr. Horace Wigan, in which Miss Neilson and Mr. Alfred Wigan will appear; and in December, a new extravaganza by Mr. George Augustus Sala.

Mrs. Hawthorne, the widow of the famous novelist, is writing a series of papers for *Putnam's Magazine*, under the title of "English Show Places described in Familiar Letters." The first of these appears in the September number, and being devoted to Newstead Abbey, will have a special interest at this time.

The "Belgravia Annual," under the editorship of Miss Braddon, will contain many interesting articles. Amongst them may be mentioned stories by Miss Braddon, Percy Fitzgerald, Miss Annie Thomas, Dutton Cook, Walter Thornbury, Joseph Hatton, Charles Carlos Clarke, &c. The annual will be superbly illustrated.

The pulpit has taken up the Byron scandal. The Rev. Mr. Dunbar, of All Saints, Lambeth, is reported to have asked in a sermon *why* Mrs. Stowe had made her now notorious revelation? and to have answered his own question by another: "For the sake of a notoriety as great as that of Judas Iscariot, or for the thirty pieces of silver offered by a magazine editor?" This would seem to show (says the *Athenæum*) that the transpontine pulpit is as startling in effects as the transpontine stage.

The next book in Mr. Arber's excellent series of English reprints is the fifteenth-century version of the "Reuelacion of Sent Nycholas to a Monke of Euyshamme," A.D. 1196, from the unique copy in the British Museum, not heretofore reprinted. It is an account of the monk's visit to Purgatory and Paradise, under the guidance of St. Nicholas, showing how sinners are punished and well-doers rewarded, and intended "for the confort and profetyng of all cristyn pepulle." There is of course much matter in it for the illustration of the life and opinions of the writer's time in England.

There is being privately circulated the prospectus of another forthcoming weekly periodical for Freemasons. Among the matter promised is "The True History of Freemasonry, tracing its Foundation to the Shepherd Kings." Considering that other masonic inquirers can barely grope their way among the guilds of the Middle Ages,—and that, as to the Shepherd Kings, Dr. Beke and other correspondents are seeking though our columns to find out who they were,—the attempt is ambitious. It is only lately a worthy brother connected Freemasonry with the Cuneform inscriptions; but as the said inscriptions obstinately refused to be read by him, and nobody who could read them would give the interpretation wished, this discovery had collapsed.—*Athenæum.*

Attention has been called to the number of lady-writers for the magazines. The *St. James's Magazine* is edited by Mrs. Riddell, authoress of "George Geith;" the *Argosy* is edited by Mrs. H. Wood, authoress of "East Lynne," and both ladies are writing several tales in *Tinsley's Magazine*. Miss Yonge, authoress of the "Heir of Redclyffe," is editing the *Monthly Packet*. Mrs. S. C. Hall assists in editing the *Art Journal*. *Macmillan's Magazine* contains besides the article by Mrs. Stowe, "A Brave Lady," by Mrs. Craik (Miss Muloch), authoress of "John Halifax;" "Estelle Russell," by Miss Olney; "Children's Literature," by Miss Yonge; "Lady Duff Gordon," by the Hon. Mrs. Norton. The story in *Temple Bar*, "Red as a Rose is She," is by a lady. Miss A. B. Edwards is the authoress of the principal story in *Good Words*, "Debenham's Vow," Miss Emily Davies has an article in the *Contemporary Review*. Recently, Dora Greenwell contributed a story to the *Gentleman's Magazine*,

NOTES ON THE JOURNALS.

The Chair of Modern History at Cambridge has been given by the Premier to Mr. Seeley. Canon Kingsley's successor is perhaps one of the most cultivated men of the day. He is a famous classic, a deep original thinker, and—the author of "Ecce Homo." The appointment is generally well received; but to Lord Shaftesbury and his party in the Church it is most unsatisfactory.

The Byron controversy retains possession of the journals; and until Mrs. Stowe has replied in *Macmillan*, as she will do next month, the subject will continue to furnish an exhaustless theme for conversation and discussion. A reporter of the *Newcastle Chronicle* publishes in that paper his account of a conversation he had with a Mrs. Minns, of Monkton, near Hebburn, who knew Lady Byron from her childhood. The balance of this lady's evidence is in favour of Lady Byron, as might have been expected; but there is more chaff than grain in the whole narrative.

Father Hyacinthe's cry for liberty in the Roman Catholic Church has drawn down upon him the wrath of most of the Paris newspapers. The letter which the barefooted Carmelite monk has given to the world is, indeed, one of a nature to create alarm amongst all classes of his co-religionists; and everyone is anxious to see what will come of it. Pére Hyacinthe's convent is of the smallest possible dimensions, with no comfort or appearance of elegance or taste about it; but the little oratory is crowded daily by the faithful, and the bitter sobbings of those who make their confession in it may be heard by anyone who has the curiosity to seek an introduction to the father.

The Note on Press rigours in Russia in last week's paper may be supplemented by a brief reference to a press trial which has just come to an end at Königsberg, in Prussia, after being in progress two years. One Herr Hoverbeck, a deputy in the Prussian Parliament, made a speech offensive to the Government, though the Herr only contended for freedom of discussion in the Prussian Chamber. The speech was reported by one of the staff of the *New Königsberg Gazette* (Herr Pensky), and upon its appearance in that journal the speaker, editor, and reporter were prosecuted. The editor (who had written a leader on the speech) was fined sixty thalers; the speaker and the reporter were acquitted.

A peculiarly shocking case has been noticed by some few journals. The other day a poor girl drowned herself in the Thames, after being injured in the cruellest way that can possibly affect a woman. She was picked out of the river, and it became necessary to examine her to ascertain if there were any marks of violence upon her. It will hardly be credited, but the suicide was taken into a back yard near one of the most crowded and busiest streets, stripped of her clothes, and there and then examined by a medical man and some policemen, in the full light of day, and in such a position that some grinning brutes at adjoining premises could look down upon this poor specimen of humanity and watch the whole affair! This happened in what we call, and often rightly, the most civilized city in this most civilized country; and it may occur again unless immediate measures are taken to provide a dead-house where such examinations may be made. No wonder the *Telegraph* advocates "a Morgue—nay a dozen Morgues," for the capital, when such scenes as the above are witnessed.

There are a good many actions for breach of promise during the year, some of which are very difficult for an unprejudiced mind to decide. What *is* a promise? It is to be feared that not a few gushing young things, who see everything *couleur de rose*, imagine a promise to lurk in a kiss, a squeeze of the hand, or some other expression of affection; and forthwith they confide to their bosom friends the information that Augustus, or Clarence, or Montague has sole possession of their beating heart. But the young man may have had no idea of engaging himself to his sweetheart, and certainly made no sort of "promise." To his surprise, however, he wakes up some fine morning to find himself famous as defendant in an action for "breach," and it is ten to one he is cast in swingeing damages. Now would it not be much better if we were to adopt the German practice of announcing betrothals publicly? In the German newspapers you may see such advertisements as these:—"Wilhelmina Johanna v. Froreich William Muller, betrothed. Blankenberg and Attenbach, August, 1869.—E. G. Modes and wife hereby announce the betrothal of their daughter Mathildie with Mr. Paul Schwarze, engineer, Stolberg, near Aix-la-Chapelle, Friberg, Aug. 15, 1869." And how these announcements would be read! It is said that ladies find no column in the papers half so attractive as that which contains the Births and Marriages. But "Betrothals" would attract beyond everything were they printed in England as they are in Germany. If any enterprising newspaper manager initiates such a form of advertisement, we shall expect a handsome premium for directing attention to the matter.

THE JESTER.

Colman was once asked if he knew Theodore Hook? "Oh, yes," he replied, "Hook and I (eye) are old associates."

A FULL HOUSE.—"What plan," said an actor to another, "shall I adopt to fill the house at my benefit?" "*Invite your creditors*," was the surly reply.

Tillotson, who was then Archbishop of Canterbury, on King William's complaining of the shortness of his sermon, answered, "Sire, could I have bestowed more time upon it, it would not have been *so long!*"

Jerrold and Laman Blanchard were strolling together about London, discussing passionately a plan for joining Byron in Greece. Jerrold, telling the story many years after, said, "But a shower of rain came on, and washed all the Greece out of us."

When George the Fourth was Prince Regent, he observed to Colman, who was dining with him, "Why, Colman, you are older than I am!" "Oh, no, sire," replied Colman, "I could not *take the liberty* of coming into the world before your Royal Highness."

A young gentleman was requested to sing where Colman was; but he assured them that he could not sing, and added, that they only wished to make a butt of him. "O, no," said Colman, "my dear sir, we want only to get a stave out of you."

NO HARM DONE.—A man of sagacity being informed of a serious quarrel between two of his female relations, asked the persons if in their quarrels either had called the other ugly? On receiving an answer in the negative, "O, then, I shall soon make up the quarrel."

HENRY VIII.— This monarch, after the death of Jane Seymour, had some difficulty to get another wife. His first offer was to the Duchess Dowager of Milan; but her answer was, "She had but *one* head; if she had *two*, one should have been at his service."

MELODRAMATIC HIT.—Burke's was a complete failure, when he flung the dagger on the floor of the House of Commons, and produced nothing but a smothered laugh, and a joke from Sheridan—"The gentleman has brought us the *knife*, but where is the *fork?*"

IMPORTANT TO BACHELORS.—Some clever fellow has invented a new kind of ink, called "the love-letter ink." It is a sure preventive against all cases of "breach of promise," as the ink *fades away*, and leaves the sheet blank, in about four weeks after being written upon.

WHAT'S IN A NAME.—Soon after Lord ——'s elevation to the peerage, he remarked that authors were often very ridiculous in the *titles* they gave. "That," said a distinguished writer present, "is an error from which even sovereigns appear *not to be exempt*."

PAYING IN KIND.—A certain Quaker slept at a hotel in a certain town. He was supplied with two wax candles. He retired early, and, as he had burned but a small part of the candles, he took them with him into his bedroom. In the morning, finding he was charged 2s. in his bill for wax candles, instead of fees to the waiter and chambermaid, *he gave to each a wax candle*.

A SLIGHT MISTAKE.—Balzac's house, the Jardies, was constructed from his own designs, and an upholsterer was sent to furnish it. The necessary articles were ordered for the dining-room and study, after which the dealer requested a list for those required for the sleeping apartments. "The bed-rooms!" exclaimed the novelist, suddenly recollecting himself. "How are we to reach them? *I have forgotten the staircase!*"

THE PAINTER.—Vigee, taking the portrait of a lady, perceived that when he was working at the mouth she was twisting her features in order to render it smaller, and put her lips into the most violent contraction. Impatient at such designing artifice, he at length said to her, "Don't hurt yourself, madam, in trying to make your mouth smaller; because, if you choose, I will make none at all."

BETWEEN THEM BOTH.—Once meeting two royal dukes in Pall Mall, one of them thus addressed Sheridan, "I say, Sherry, we have just been discussing whether you are a great fool or a great rogue. What is your own opinion, my boy?" Sheridan smiled at the question; then, taking each of the distinguished personages by the arm, rejoined, "Why, faith, I believe I am between both."

Amongst young Sheridan's schoolfellows was the son of an eminent physician, who boasted that his father was a gentleman professionally attending the nobility. "And so is my father, and as good as yours any day." "Ah, but your father is an actor, Dick," said the doctor's son; "therefore it is impossible that he can be a gentleman." "You may think so," rejoined Sheridan, "but I don't; for your father *kills* people, and mine only *amuses* them."

PAYING FOR IMMORTALITY.—An actress complained to Foote of the poor salary she was receiving from Garrick at Drury Lane. Foote asked her why she had gone to him, knowing the salary she might have had at the Haymarket? "He talked me over so," was her reply, "telling me he would make me immortal." "Did he so, indeed!" said Foote. "Well, then, I suppose I must outbid him that way. Come to me, then, when you are free, I'll give you two pounds a week more, and charge you nothing for immortality."

BURKE AND FOX.—Mr. Burke, in speaking of the indisposition of Mr. Fox, which prevented his making a motion for an investigation into the conduct of Lord Sandwich, said, "No one laments Mr. Fox's illness more than I do; and I declare that if he should continue ill, the inquiry into the conduct of the First Lord of the Admiralty should not be proceeded upon; and, should the country suffer so serious a calamity as his death, it ought to be followed up earnestly and solemnly; nay, of so much consequence is the inquiry to the public, that no bad use would be made of the skin of my departed friend (should such, alas, be his fate), if, like that of John Zisca, it should be converted *into a drum*, and used for the purpose of sounding an alarm to the people of England."

CONFUSION WORSE CONFOUNDED.—Foote in the early part of his life, and for his benefit, attempted Hamlet. In the quarrel scene with Laertes—

> "What is the reason that you use me thus?
> I lov'd you ever,—but 'tis no matter;
> Let Hercules himself do what he may,
> The cat will mew, the dog will have his day"—

he entered so much into the scene as to throw himself out of the words, which he confused thus: "I loved you ever—but it's no matter; the dog will mew—no, that's the cat; the cat will bark—no, that's the dog; the dog will mew—no, that's the cat; the cat will—no, the dog; the cat, the dog—pha—pho—it's something about mewing and barking; but, really ladies and gentlemen, I know nothing more of the matter."

CHANGING HATS.—Barry, the painter, was with Nollekens at Rome in 1760, and they were extremely intimate. Barry took the liberty one night, when they were about to leave the English coffee-house, to exchange hats with him. Barry's was edged with lace, and Nollekens' was a very shabby, plain one. Upon his returning the hat the next morning, he was asked by Nollekens why he left him his gold-laced hat. "Why, to tell you the truth, my dear Joey," answered Barry, "I fully expected assassination last night; and I was to have been known by *my laced hat*." Nollekens used to relate the story, adding, "It's what the Old Bailey people would call a true bill against Jew."

DICKENS—LEMON—WEBSTER.

Birmingham has this week been visited by three of the best known men of the day—Charles Dickens, Mark Lemon, and Benjamin Webster. If the Midland Institute were to search the country through for examples of the triumphant success of genius directed by that "commonplace, humble, patient, daily toiling, drudging attention" which Charles Dickens held up on Monday night as the talisman that opens all the gates of Fame, it could not find brighter and better modern instances than we have in the persons of the three men whose names head this hasty notice.

Mr. Charles Dickens delivered his promised inaugural address to the students of the Birmingham and Midland Institute at the Town Hall, Birmingham, on Monday evening. The Hall was crowded with a brilliant audience. Mr. Dickens's speech, to which we shall further refer next week, was conceived and delivered in his happiest manner; it was thoroughly characteristic from beginning to end. Mr. Dickens had a very warm reception, and could not have been but gratified at the welcome which his Midland friends and admirers gave him. In our next Number we shall give an Illustration of the proceedings.

Mr. Benjamin Webster appeared at the Birmingham Theatre Royal on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday nights, as *Robert Landry* in the "Dead Heart." One of the most arduous parts to represent, the character of the man who emerges from the Bastille after seventeen years' incarceration, with his heart dead to every feeling, is played by Mr. Webster with a dramatic power that few other actors possess. In the scene in the last act, where *Landry* discovers *Katherine* at the foot of the guillotine, and, his old love returning at the sight of her, he promises to save her son, the veteran actor showed that he retains all the ability with which he has charmed and delighted us for we are afraid to say how many years; whilst in the scene where the interest culminates in the substitution of *Landry* for "Number Thirty-three," and his appearance on the scaffold, the audience evinced their appreciation of the artistes' exertions by unanimously recalling Mr. Webster and Mrs. Alfred Mellon, whose impersonation of *Katherine* was one which deserves the highest eulogium. It will be interesting to many of our readers to learn that in early life, before Mr. Webster commenced his brilliant career, he came to Birmingham for the purpose of seeking an engagement on the stage, and it was here that he purchased his first piece of theatrical property—a favourite sword for one of Kean's most popular characters. It had always been Mr. Webster's desire as a youth to play this particular part, and although his *rôle* includes the best known parts in the best plays, it is a remarkable fact that he has never played the character for which he purchased the Birmingham weapon. Mr. Webster's has been a most interesting career in many ways; we should like to see the story of his life in print. If we might suggest an author, the coincidence of Mr. Mark Lemon's visit to Birmingham at the same time as Mr. Webster's at once puts us on the track. When Mark Lemon was a young man, seeking to win his spurs in dramatic literature, Mr. Benjamin Webster, the spirited proprietor of the Adelphi, was the first to recognise Mr. Lemon's ability, and it was upon Mr. Webster's stage that his first play was produced. Since those early days we believe Mr. Mark Lemon and Mr. Webster have maintained a close friendship. Both men have become illustrious in their several walks; both lives are full of peculiar interest; and we should like to see the Actor's story told by the Author's pen.

Mr. Mark Lemon, for the second time in Birmingham, has given this week his Dramatic Reading of *Falstaff*, assisted by a small, efficient staff of actors. Mr. Lemon's representation of the character is without doubt the truest and best interpretation of modern days. Without losing sight of the sensuous, not to say sensual, characteristics of the Fat Knight, Mr. Lemon makes him what he assuredly might have been, a gentleman by education and manners; and with all the unction and fun of *Sir John* there is here and there a touch of pathos which adds dignity and humanity to Shakespeare's much-maligned, much-misrepresented creation. Play-goers and students of Shakespeare owe Mr. Lemon a debt of gratitude for the care and skill with which he has brought before them one of the most remarkable of Shakespeare's many remarkable characters. At the risk of committing what may be regarded as an impertinence, we venture to make another suggestion to the famous Editor of *Punch*. The interest of his performance would be greatly augmented by a thoroughly dramatic representation of "Henry IV." on the stage, with the play well mounted, and the minor parts well filled. And what more delightful, following this, than the continuation of *Falstaff's* story by the "Merry Wives?" It is often asserted that the humour in the "Merry Wives" is too broad for general representation; but the same hand which has so dexterously expurgated the objectionable portion of the Falstaff text in "Henry IV." could easily bring within "modest compass" the bright, witty, and sparkling dialogue in "The Merry Wives of Windsor."

BIRTHS.

FOLKESTONE.—Sept. 26th, at Ufford Hall, Stamford, Viscountess Folkestone, of a daughter.

KENDRICK.—Sept. 23rd, at Cradley Heath, the wife of Thomas Kendrick, chain manufacturer, of a son.

REGISTER OF BANKRUPTS.

William Barnard, St. John, Bedwardine, Worcestershire, journeyman miller.—William Hendley, late of Exhall, Warwickshire, licensed victualler.—Michael Kaerns, Upper Hadderidge, Burslem, Staffordshire, fruiterer.—John Merrick, Salop Street, Darwin street, Birmingham, carpenter.—Samuel Powell and Arthur Carr, Newhall Street, Birmingham, merchants.—Henry Rawson, Winkburn, Nottinghamshire, labourer.—John Spafford, Upper Parliament Street, Nottingham, butcher.—Thomas Taylor, Chesterfield, fruiter and fish dealer.—William Townsend, late of Attleborough, near Nuneaton, butcher.—Thomas Sutton Wakeman, late of Islington, Birmingham, fancy goods factor.—William Warburton, Sturton, Nottinghamshire, coal merchant.—Rowland Glegg Barnsley, Birmingham, malleable iron founder, Birmingham.—Joseph Blackmore, Barnstaple, bootmaker.—John E. Blakemore, late of Darlaston, plumber.—G. and G. E. Gorton, Birmingham, fender manufacturers.—Benjamin Hainsworth, Ordsall, Nottinghamshire, common brewer.—T. Hopwood, Wolverhampton, bootmaker.—Samuel T. Newbold, Derby, broker.—Thomas Smith, Tunstall, beerseller.—Henry and C. Woods, Cheltenham, wine merchants.

PARTNERSHIPS DISSOLVED.

Mallison and Harrison, Derby, cotton spinners, as far as regards J. Mallison.—E. and I. Smith, Leicester, lambs' wool spinners.—William Turner Palmer and Martin Charles Palmer, Hanley, architects.—William Rollason and John Banks Nicklin, St. Paul's Square, Birmingham, merchants.—Thomas Cooper, Joseph Simpkin, Francis Hames, and Cave John Ellson, Leicester, drapers.—Joseph Holder and Lister Lee, River Street, Birmingham, ironfounders.—John Wilson and Francis John Goodway, Summer Lane, Birmingham, grocers.

MARKETS.

CORN.—LONDON, Monday.—The show of samples on the Kentish and Essex stands was very limited, yet the trade opened very heavily at a decline of 1s. per quarter on the best samples, and more on low descriptions. The business on foreign was quite on a small scale, at a similar reduction, 2s. less being accepted on American spring. The trade was slow, at a decline of 1s. per sack on Norfolks and other country sorts, as well as on foreign descriptions, barrels being about 6d. lower. Town rates were unaltered. The best new malting barley found a quiet sale at unaltered rates. Foreign grinding was further reduced 6d. per quarter. The malt trade was very inactive, and rates nominal. New corn of all descriptions was again 1s. per quarter cheaper, and Russian sold at 6d. less money, with, however, a fair trade.—WALSALL, Tuesday.—Being the Michaelmas fair there was a fair attendance. The supply of corn was short, and a slow demand. Wheat averages 18s., and flour has again dropped.

CATTLE.—LONDON, MONDAY.—Beef trade heavy; lower rates are submitted to. Supply of foreign short. Mutton a short supply, and a dull and heavy trade, especially second and inferior kinds. A great reduction in the price of veal. Pork unaltered.—BIRMINGHAM SMITHFIELD MARKET, TUESDAY.—We received a short supply of beasts on offer this day. Trade slow. Sheep and lambs a moderate supply. Trade inactive. Fat pigs a good supply; a fair clearance effected. Beef, 6d. to 7¼d. per lb.; mutton, 6d. to 7⅜d. per lb.; lamb, 6d. to 7⅜d. per lb.; bacon pigs, 10s. to 11s. 3d. per score; porket ditto, 11s. to 11s. 6d. per score.

HOPS.—LONDON, MONDAY.—Picking is now almost brought to a conclusion, and the result is not so satisfactory as was expected. The yield is variously estimated at from £70,000 to £120,000 duty. A moderate quantity of new produce has come to market. The demand has not been active, but prices have ruled firm.

OUR "SURPLUS POPULATION."

Mr. E. C. Tufnell, Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools for Pauper Children in the Home District, states, in his report this year, that he has an entire disbelief in the common idea about there being a surplus population in England. He says that at the pauper schools in his district the universal statement is that there is no difficulty in finding situations for the children, and that for the girls especially the demand is often for four times as many as can be supplied. In the metropolitan schools, when the question is put whether there is any difficulty in obtaining situations, the uniform answer of the superintendents is that they cannot supply the demand. For domestic servants the demand is so pressing that at one of the large district schools Mr. Tufnell was informed that there were six applicants for every girl that could be recommended for service. But then the real demand is not simply for labour, but for trained labour, efficient labour, intelligent labour; and Mr. Tufnell states that nothing can be better than the training of the children in the large district schools. He says that when he sees half-starved Arabs turning somersaults in the streets he longs to send them to a district school, whence in two years they would come forth worth at least 6s. or 7s. a week. The secret for destroying hereditary pauperism is to educate the children well, apart from adult paupers, and then send them into the world as far removed as possible from their miserable relations and parishes, where they have known nothing but vice and misery. The army, navy, and the merchant service are peculiarly suitable for them. The masters of workhouses will tell you that the able-bodied inmates are the idlest and most disreputable characters in their parishes. They cannot get employment, not because there is no employment to be had, but because they cannot furnish intelligent, efficient labour. Mr. Tufnell maintains that what is really wanted is not emigration, but a more general system of education.

A new copper mine has been discovered in South Australia, between Port Augusta and the Blindman. The finder, Mr. Thomas Flett, has been offered £4,000 for his discovery.

It is still uncertain whether the Suez Canal will be completed in time for the proposed day of opening, the 17th of November. The latest advices with regard to the progress of the canal are to the effect that the Bitter Lakes had on the 5th ultimo about 3·20 mètres wanting to bring them up to the level of the Mediterranean.

ALEXANDRE DUMAS.

Since the production of his first play "*Henri III. et sa Cour*" in 1828, Alexandre Dumas has been one of the most prolific literary men of the age.

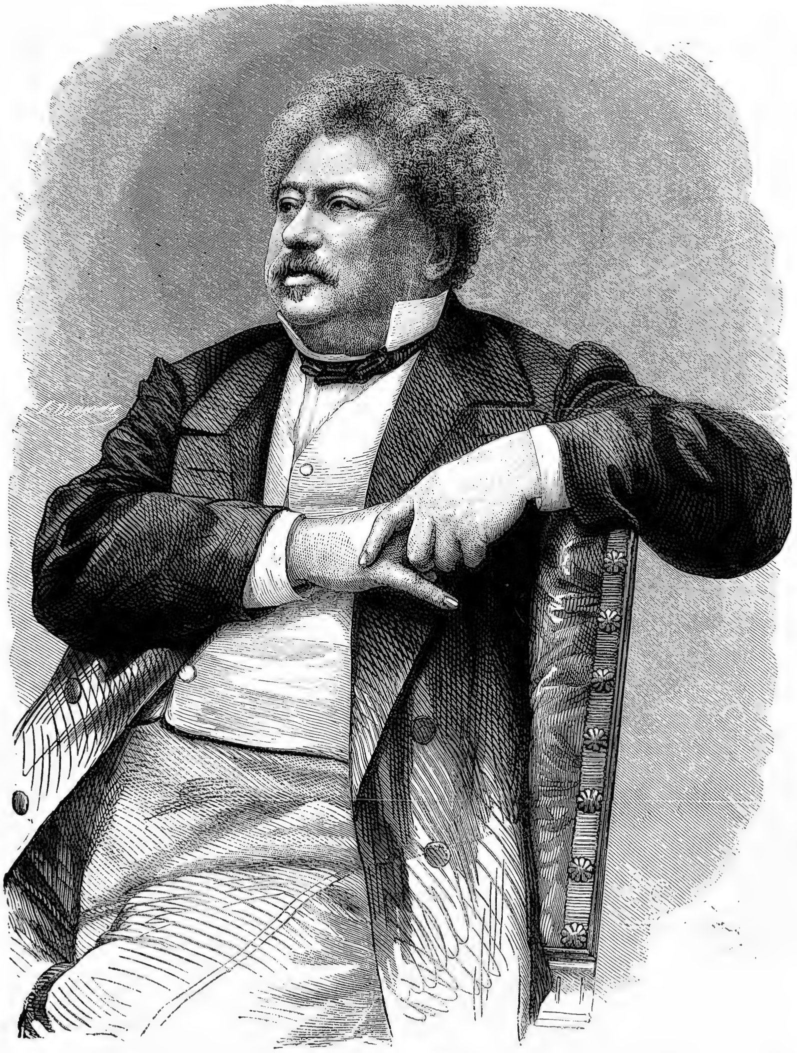
His works number some 1,200 volumes. Out of France, he is but little known as a dramatic author, the universal reputation he has acquired being identified with "Monte Cristo," "Les Trois Mousquetaires" and others of his wonderful novels.

The French stage, however, owes no little of its realism and very much of its false sentiment to the almost undivided sway he once held over it. His first success in life is said to have been attributable to his handwriting. He presented a copy of the play *Henri III.* in manuscript to the Duchesse d'Orléans, who, surprised at the penmanship it displayed, sent for the author, and exerted the influence of Royalty in his behalf.

Alexandre Dumas is a descendant of the Marquis de la Pailleterie, his father being son of that nobleman by a native of St. Domingo. He was born at Villers-Cotterets in France, on July 24, 1803. His father, although he had done good service in the army and had attained the rank of general died in prison, leaving his family unprovided for. Young Dumas was apprenticed to an accountant, with whom he remained five years. He then came to Paris, and through the interest of General Foy obtained a clerkship in the Secretary's office of the Duke of Orleans, afterwards King. It was during the time he held this appointment that he witnessed the performance of a play of Shakespeare, which seems to have awakened the literary and dramatic talent till then latent within him. He became a popular dramatic author, and continued to supply the Paris theatres with dramas, writing with amazing rapidity. This career was followed until two of his plays, in succession, being condemned by the censor, he flung away the pen in anger, and has since refused to contribute to dramatic literature, leaving the honour of doing so in a still more pernicious style than he had formed, to his son, the author of "La Dame aux Camélias" and other meretricious works.

Alexandre Dumas has led a life full of incident. His *Memoirs* written by himself are highly interesting—narrated, as they are, by one who well knows how to turn such material to good account. The authorship of the "Tour de Nesle" was disputed at the time that work appeared, and was the cause of a duel between Dumas and the other claimant, M. Gaillardet.

In 1857 Alexandre Dumas visited London, and in 1860 made a long stay with Garibaldi, of whom he has published a Life, so dramatically written as to resemble fiction more than the reliable history of any individual, however true every detail may be therein related.



ALEXANDRE DUMAS.

Among other strange stories told of Alexandre Dumas is that of his keepinga corps of novel-writers who carry out the idea s he gives them while he occasionally "writes in" the principal characters. If such an arrangement really exists, the 1,200 volumes are more easily accounted for than would otherwise be the case.

The portrait we give is an excellent likeness of the celebrated *littérateur*.

"SIR SIMON SIMPLE."

Under this title a new play by Mr. Henry J. Byron, with Mr. Sothern in the title-rôle, was produced on Thursday, the 23rd ult., at the Birmingham Theatre Royal. We should perhaps rather say the new piece was "tried" at Birmingham before the author submitted it to a London audience; as other plays have been tested in Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham. A crowded, brilliant house caused the test to be regarded rather as a crucial one. Fashion filled the dress-circle and boxes; the pit overflowed with critical playgoers; there was a gallery that would have gladdened the heart of any but the most avaricious manager—a class to which Mr. Simpson by no means belongs. Every newspaper in the town was represented.

"Sir Simon Simple" is one of the best of Mr. Byron's pieces; but it is unequal throughout. *Sir Simon* (Mr. Sothern) is a good-natured simpleton who has been brought up by *Mr. Murgatroyd* (Mr. J. C. Smith), whose ruling passion appears to be a desire to arrange a marriage between the young baronet and his (*Murgatroyd's*) niece, *Nelly Craven* (Miss Edith Bertram), who, being in love with her uncle's head clerk, *Frederick Grantley* (Mr. Wyke Moore), is naturally averse to such a step. The scene in the first act between *Sir Simon* and *Nelly* is exceedingly amusing. The baronet, in a few almost Dundreary-like detached sentences, avows his passion, and, after the manner of love-sick swains in general, is so nervous that he picks to pieces the bouquet he has purchased in Covent-garden for the young lady. When, however, his dull mind grasps the real state of affairs, and he sees that *Nelly* and *Grantley* are betrothed, *Sir Simon* rises so superior to his character as to at once establish between him and his audience a feeling of friendship. *Sir Simon* has no sooner declared his readiness to give up all thought of *Nelly* than *Mr. Murgatroyd* comes into the room, delighted at the favourable turn matters have taken. As *Murgatroyd* is a rich bill-discounter, and as we are not told what has prompted him to bring up the young baronet under his own roof, we were at a loss to know the object *Murgatroyd* had in view in marrying the young people; more especially as the *quasi Sir Simon* turns out to be no baronet at all, as *Murgatroyd*, in his rage at the failure of his scheme, tells him. *Murgatroyd* informs *Sir Simon* that he is the son of a tippling washerwoman—one *Mrs. Mould*, who, entering the money-lender's drawing-room just after this revelation, attempts to embrace the ex-baronet, but is kept at bay by *Sir Simon* seizing her umbrella, and as it were warding off the maternal kiss which *Mrs. Mould* is waiting to give him.

The second act shows us the ex-baronet (now *Augustus Cooksey*, *Mrs. Mould's* former surname) in his supposed mother's house—a wretched place, with a mangle and a clothes-horse for its principal ornaments. *Mr. Mould*, who evidently does not hold with Horace that *Poeta nascitur, non fit*, and whose acquaintance we had made in the first act, when he was the victim of domestic tyranny of the worst description, now makes a great show of resistance, and threatens to reveal something or other unless his wife pays more attention to his comforts. *Mrs. Mould* is a most unpleasant, unsatisfactory character, living apparently only to snub her second husband and her alleged son. *Augustus* (*né Sir Simon*) bears with her, and figuratively "sits upon" *Mould* when that worthy behaves rudely to his wife. *Mr.* and *Mrs. Mould* opportunely leave the house for a short time, which gives *Sir Simon* an opening for moralising on his changed condition. He is still the same good-tempered, courteous gentleman he was before his sudden reverse of fortune; no hardship seems to affect him—nothing is too humble for him to do. His recital of the reception given to him by his former friends has a touch of true pathos about it which is quite beyond the reach of many of our comedians. *Sir Simon* is interrupted in his meditations by the unexpected entrance of *Nelly* and *Grantley*, who have been privately married, and have left *Murgatroyd's* house. Now to be jilted is bad enough; but it is made a thousand times harder to bear when your old sweetheart comes and begs you to shelter her and her husband. *Sir Simon* justly thinks this very "hard lines," but after some pathetic reflections, which sent many pocket-handkerchiefs to fair faces in dress circle as well as in pit and gallery, his good-nature and honesty prevail, and he allows the young couple to take possession of a room in the *Moulds'* house. The *dramatis personæ* are now increased by the entrance of a mysterious veiled lady, whom we discover is *Mrs. Merton* (Miss Ada Cavendish), upon whom the duty falls of explaining that several years ago, "on the night of the great storm" (was Mr. Byron thinking of the incident in Harrison Ainsworth's play when he wrote this?), she, after leaving her child with *Mrs. Mould*, fled from England. The plot now becomes a little less misty. Before, however, *Sir Simon* can be told that *Mrs. Merton* is his mother, old *Murgatroyd* enters and insolently demands that his niece be given up to him. To such a pitch does he carry his rude conduct that *Sir Simon*, with the remark that if he is not very wise, he at least can fight, takes *Mr. Murgatroyd's* stick from him and breaks it across his knee. He is about to further punish the bill-discounter when *Mrs. Merton*, who has been concealed behind a clothes-horse, rushes forward and shrieks melodramatically, "Do not touch him, he is your father!" This was evidently meant to be the "sensation" scene, and formed a tolerably effective *tableau* to the second act.

In the third act we have *Sir Simon* restored to his former station in society, in his mother's house, with *Nelly* and her husband. *Sir Simon's* recital of his day's work, that of distributing pamphlets and books of "The Washerwoman of Finchley" type, is very amusing; and Mr. Byron does not neglect this chance of enforcing the moral that as much real good may be done by looking after the poor man's comforts, as by plying him with doses of "goody" literature—a sentiment that finds an approving echo in many of the audience and some "bravos," whilst *Sir Simon's* remark that instead of giving away the books to a certain man he "stood a pot of beer and a screw" aroused pit and gallery to uncontrolled delight. *Mould*, who is a sort of clerk to *Mrs. Merton*, with more time than he ever had before to devote to his favorite recreation, rhyming (and such rhymes!), develops into a very sanctified and amusing personage. Everything is now *couleur de rose*, until the disastrous tidings are brought that *Mrs. Merton's* fortune, invested in the "Anglo-Moravian Mining Company," is entirely lost. What effect this would have upon the happy family we are not permitted to see, for *Murgatroyd* enters the room in disguise, and throwing off his false hair and whiskers reveals himself as *Mrs. Merton's* husband, with whom, unknowingly, she had invested her money, which is accordingly safe. There are reconciliations between *Mr.* and *Mrs. Murgatroyd* and *Mr.* and *Mrs. Mould*, and the piece terminates with a rhymed tag, which is simply detestable, and which we hope Mr. Byron has had the good sense to cut out before this.

We may congratulate Mr. Byron upon a partial and Mr. Sothern upon a complete success. The make-up of the actor is a splendid one. He has shaved closely the more effectually to represent the part, and has so hidden his individuality that it was difficult to recognise in the beardless, whiskerless, light-haired young baronet the *David Garrick* of a previous night. The author has put into *Sir Simon's* part some "eccentric" dialogue, which is as irresistible as were the humorous sayings of Lord Dundreary; and the result of this and Mr. Sothern's careful, painstaking manner is the creation of a character which will become widely popular. The ladies engaged in the piece struggled with rather commonplace parts. Nothing more calls for notice, except that Mr. Blakeley's representation of *Mould* was exceedingly happy and diverting; and that when the curtain fell Mr. Sothern and the other ladies and gentlemen were recalled to receive the congratulations of the audience. Mr. Byron being loudly called for, Mr. Sothern (who rather naïvely took this last measure of applause to his own credit) asked if he might be allowed to tell the author, who was anxious to know how his piece had been received, that it was a success. The fresh applause sufficiently answered this appeal.

The new play was repeated on Friday and Saturday.

Mr. Josiah Mason's Orphanage at Erdington.—Since Mr. Mason's munificence has been published to the world, the number of applications for permission to inspect the Orphanage at Erdington has been so large, that the founder has been compelled to adopt this mode of informing the public that the following Wednesdays have been set apart for the admission of visitors: October 6, 13, 20, and 27. On those days the Orphanage will be thrown open from two to three o'clock. Admittance is by card, to be obtained at the Orphanage; Mr. Mason's pen manufactory, 36, Lancaster-street, Birmingham; and of the Trustees. Applications for cards may be made either personally or by letter; if by letter, a stamp should be enclosed. This arrangement will be satisfactory to the public, and allow the regular work of the institution to be carried on uninterruptedly. It should not be forgotten by visitors that the Orphanage is a private institution, independent of any other support than that already given it by its generous founder, and that no contributions whatever are expected or received.

MID-ENGLAND.

Old Michael Drayton, one of the bravest sons of the brave old shires which constitute Mid-England, in his loving description of the broad and fertile central plain in which he was born, exclaims "This we the heart of England still do call." More than a thousand years before, when his rude hamlet was a flourishing Roman city, it was then the heart of England. The Roman legions found that their two great military roads, the Watling-street and the Fosseway, which crossed the kingdom obliquely from the south-east to the north-west and from the south-west to the north-east, intersected each other on the summit of one of the bluff promontories of high table-land which ran into the plain.

> "Bennones! where two military ways
> Each other cross, transverse from sea to sea,
> The Romans' hostile paths!"

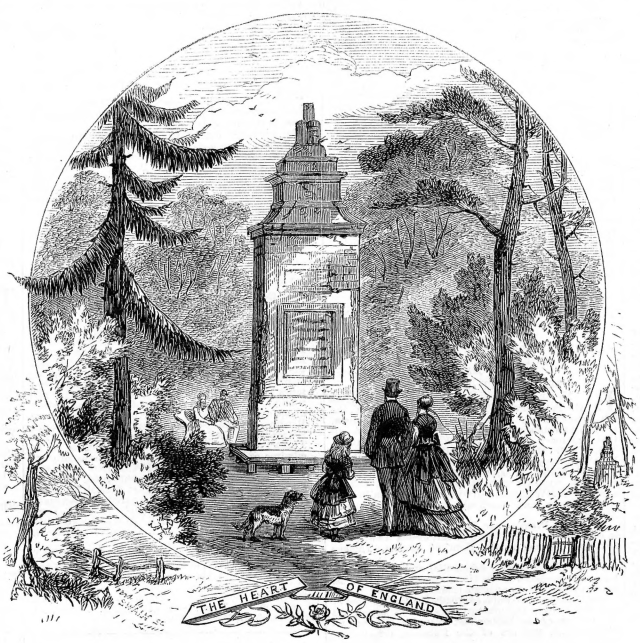
Here, where the tributary waters of the Avon and the Trent flow on either hand to the western and eastern seas, was their estimate of Mid-England. So accurate was their measurement that no nearer spot can be found even now. It is nearly equidistant from Portsmouth, Yarmouth, and Aberystwith; from Penzance and Berwick-on-Tweed; exactly midway between London and Liverpool, and it stands on the boundary-line between the shires of Warwick and of Leicester.

Apart from the historic associations of High Cross, it is a pleasant place to visit, for from it no less than fifty-seven churches can be counted on a clear day. It is easily reached from Ullesthorpe station, from which it is only distant three miles. It is five miles from Hinckley and about the same distance from Lutterworth. The Cross shown in the engraving only dates from 1712, when it was erected on the site of an ancient beacon. On the battered pedestal you can yet make out the following inscriptions:—

Vicinarum provinciarum, Vervicensis scilicet et Leicestrensis, ornamenta, proceres patritiique, auspiciis illustrissimi Basilii Comitis de Denbeigh, hanc columnam statuendam curaverunt, in gratam pariter et perpetuam memoriam Jani tandem a Serenissima Anna clausi A.D. MDCCXII.

Which is thus translated,

The nobleman and gentry, ornaments of the neighbouring counties of Warwick and Leicester, at the instances of the Right Honourable Basil Earl of Denbigh, have caused this pillar to be erected, in grateful as well as perpetual remembrance of Peace at last restored by her Majesty Queen Anne, in the year of our Lord 1712.



HIGH CROSS, NEAR ULLESTHORPE.

The inscription on the other side runs thus,

Si Veterum Romanorum vestigia quæras, hic cernas viator. Hic enim celeberrimæ illorum viæ militares sese mutuo secantes ad extremos usque Britanniæ limites procurrent: hic stativa sua habuerunt Vennones; et ad primum ad hinc lapidem castra sua ad Stratam, et ad Fossam tumulum, Claudius quidam cohortis præfectus habuisse videtur.

Which may be thus rendered,

If, traveller, you search for the footsteps of the ancient Romans, here you may behold them. For here their most celebrated ways, crossing one another, extend to the utmost boundaries of Britain: here the Vennones kept their quarters; and at the distance of one mile from hence, Claudius, a certain commander of a cohort, seems to have had a camp, towards the street, and towards the foss a tomb.

The Cross is enclosed now in the garden of the neighbouring farm house, and its appearance from the road is shown in one of the vignettes. The tomb of Claudius, which is vulgarised to Cloudsley Bush, is shown in the other. In the time of Camden, the rustics carted the bones and refuse of the Roman conqueror of Britain away as manure. There is hardly a relic of the bygone city of Bennones, or even of the Saxon Claycester left. But the intersection of the Roman roads marks yet the Heart of England.

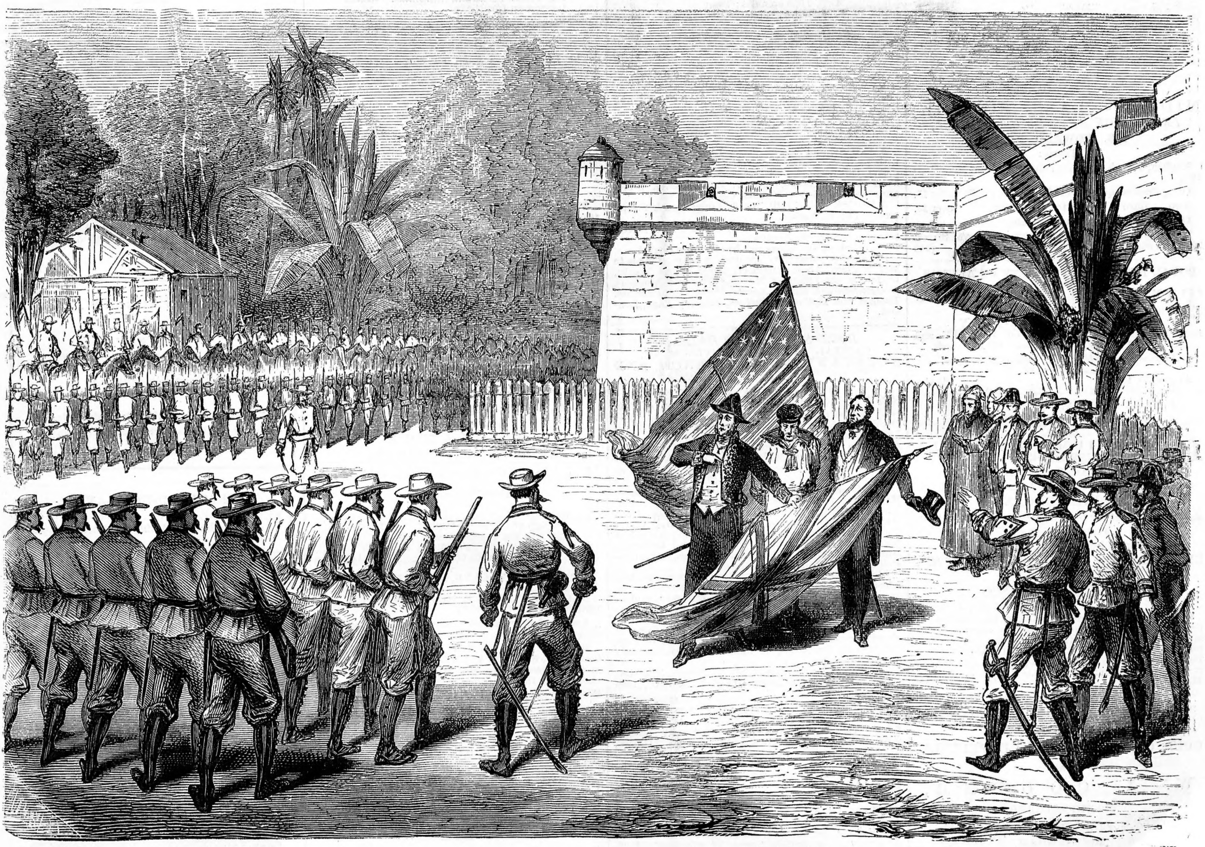
GALLANT CONDUCT IN CUBA.

Mr. Ramsden, our Vice-Consul at Santiago, in Cuba, has greatly distinguished himself by an act of heroism and spirited diplomacy. According to the *Jamaica Guardian*, an Englishman was arrested by the Spanish authorities being suspected of belonging to a band of Filibusters. He was tried and condemned to death, wrongly so, in the opinion of all who judged the case impartially. The man was innocent. His punishment was protested against by our official representative, all however, to no purpose. The day appointed for the execution arrived —the prisoner was led out to be shot. At the very moment when the order was being given to fire, Mr. Ramsden, accompanied by his colleague the American Consul, rushed towards the intended victim, and shielding him with the flags of the two nations desired the Spaniards to fire upon the National Colours at their peril! The impending sacrifice was stayed—the prisoner forthwith set at liberty. A thrill of honest pride must be felt by every Englishman who hears of this brave deed, inspired as it was by a sense of justice and firm reliance upon the support of the two nations in the event of any catastrophe accruing.

While heartily congratulating Mr. Ramsden upon the heroic energy he displayed, the share taken by the American Consul in the good cause should not be forgotten.

The drawing we give of the event is from a sketch taken on the spot.

Mr. G. F. Muntz, of Umberslade Hall, has just given the liberal donation of £500 towards the Working Men's Fund now being raised for the enlargement of the Queen's Hospital, Birmingham.



GALLANT CONDUCT OF THE ENGLISH AND AMERICAN CONSULS IN CUBA.

W. T. BELCHER, Mus. Bac. Oxon., Fell. Coll. Org., Professor of the Organ, Pianoforte, Singing, and the Theory of Music, 3, Hampstead Road, and at 23, Worcester Street, Birmingham. [24

TO LET, at Christmas next, an Entire PREMISES, suitable for a Cabinet Maker, Builder, or any other Light Trade; a Premises consisting of Upper and Lower Shop, Show Room (Upper and Lower), with Stable and entire Yard.—Apply to Thomas Turner, 25, Kent Street. [131

WARWICKSHIRE.—To be LET, Unfurnished, or to be SOLD with immediate possession, a VILLA RESIDENCE in the very best part of Leamington, overlooking the Jephson Gardens, containing three Entertaining Rooms, five best Bed Rooms, six Servants' ditto, Bath Room, Adequate Offices. The Stabling is of a very superior description, and has been recently built upon the most improved principle. It comprises accommodation for eight Horses, large Coach-house, Harness Room, Granary, Men's Rooms, &c.—For further particulars, apply to Messrs. Cookes and Sons, the Midland Counties Estate and House Agency Offices, 32, Warwick-street, Leamington.

WARWICK.—Within three minutes' walk of the Milverton Station, on the London and North Western Railway. To be LET on LEASE a moderate sized VILLA RESIDENCE, standing in its own grounds, with Greenhouse, Conservatory, Croquet Ground, &c.; and adequate entertaining Rooms and Bed Rooms.—For further particulars, apply to Messrs. Cookes & Sons, Land Agents, 32, Warwick Street, Leamington. [146

GREAT MALVERN.—To be SOLD by PRIVATE CONTRACT, that superior, well-arranged, Stone-built FREEHOLD VILLA RESIDENCE, "THE NOOK," of modern structure, situated in a favourite locality of this delightful neighbourhood, standing in its own grounds, commanding most extensive views, with Carriage Entrance, Croquet Lawn, tastefully planted Pleasure Grounds, Kitchen Garden, &c., containing spacious Entrance Hall, Drawing, Dining Rooms, and Study, six Bed Rooms, Bath Room, Butler's Pantry, Cellarage, and complete Domestic Offices, within half a mile of Railway Station and Abbey Church. Immediate possession. Great part of the excellent Furniture, including a Chamber Organ, can be taken at a valuation, if required.—For particulars and cards to view, apply to Mr. Lear, House and Estate Agent, Great Malvern.

FREEHOLD FOR SALE.—Most important property containing a valuable bed of sand, comparatively inexhaustible and well known in the locality of Tipton, Westbromwich, and Wednesbury, and underlying which are beds of coal and ironstone, with unusual facilities of water carriage; a railway in the immediate vicinity is now being made. Apply by letter post paid, to A1., ILLUSTRATED MIDLAND NEWS Office, 108, New Street, Birmingham. [104

TO MANUFACTURERS AND OTHERS.—FREEHOLD LAND within five miles of Birmingham, adjoining a first-class Railway Station and Canal, to be SOLD, suitable for the erection of Railway wheel or tyre rolling works, or any other important manufacture requiring solidity of foundation, as it is all maiden mine untouched. If preferred would be let on ground rent for a term of years. Further particulars may be ascertained on application, by letter addressed to G.W.R., ILLUSTRATED MIDLAND NEWS Office, 108, New Street, Birmingham. [107

BRUNSWICK SCHOOL, LEAMINGTON, Mr. JOHN H. HAWLEY, Principal, (author of "Senior English Composition," "Junior English Composition," "A First Book of English Grammar," &c.,) assisted by four resident Classical, French, and other Masters. Drilling by a Drill Sergeant. Mr. Hawley's Pupils have taken first and second class Certificates at the Oxford Middle Class Examinations; have been successful in the Civil Service and the Preliminary Law Examinations; and have obtained Government Prizes for Drawing. A good Cricket Field and Swimming Baths near the School.—Terms moderate, and inclusive if preferred. Numerous references in Birmingham and the neighbourhood. Prospectuses on application. [103

BIRMINGHAM
MIDDLE-CLASS SCHOOL,
FREDERICK ST., NEWHALL HILL,
MR. EDWARD BALL.

TERMS:

English, French, Drawing, Chemistry, and Mathematics.

One guinea per quarter, in advance, for pupils under 15.
Two ditto ditto ditto over 15.

Quarter commences from any date.

A prospectus may be had at 22, Congreve Street, 71, High Street, or at the School. [145

ROYAL BIRMINGHAM SOCIETY OF ARTISTS.

THE AUTUMN EXHIBITION
OF THE SOCIETY
IS NOW OPEN DAILY,
from Ten till Six o'clock, and on MONDAY and THURSDAY EVENINGS from 7 till 10 o'clock.
Admission, One Shilling. Season Tickets, 5s.
Catalogues, 6d.
August 30, 1869. [144

PEDAL ORGANS, 6 *to* 120 *Guineas.*
DRAWING ROOM ORGANS, 20 *to* 38 *Guineas.*

HARMONIUMS ENTIRELY SUPERSEDED.
75 GOLD AND SILVER MEDALS
AWARDED TO MASON AND HAMLIN'S
CABINET ORGANS.
American Resonant Air Chamber Organs, cheapest and best.
ALWAYS IN TUNE.
Warranted by the Makers for five years.
BREAVINGTON & SONS, 309, REGENT ST., LONDON.
Sole Agents for Great Britain.

Leicester, Sept. 1st, 1869.

Gentlemen,—The American Organ has arrived in perfect order. I hardly know how to express to you my great satisfaction with it. . . The richness and purity of its tone, and the depth and power of the Sub Bass are truly wonderful. I never before met with an instrument so near perfection.—HENRY J. LESLIE, Mus. D. [143

THE TRADE SUPPLIED
WITH ALL KINDS OF
GOLD, GILT, AND PLATED JEWELLERY,
BY
W. J. COOPER,
MANUFACTURER,
99, *SMALLBROOK STREET,*
BIRMINGHAM.
Wholesale and Retail.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE, adjoining the counties of Warwick and Worcester, at EBRINGTON and CHIPPING CAMPDEN, near Evesham, Stratford-upon-Avon, and Shipston.

MR. H. W. SMITH begs to announce that he is favoured with instructions to OFFER for SALE by PUBLIC AUCTION, at the Noel Arms Hotel, in Chipping Campden, on THURSDAY, the 14th day of October next, at Two o'clock in the afternoon precisely, and in fourteen lots, several very valuable and highly-important FREEHOLD ESTATES, comprising the well-known and valuable MANOR and FARM of CHARRINGWORTH, with sundry FREEHOLD TITHE RENT-CHARGES, situated in Ebrington; nearly the whole of the VILLAGE and LANDS of BROAD CAMPDEN, and various extremely rich and productive FARMS in Chipping Campden, Berrington, and Westington, all Tithe-free, and containing in the whole about 1,523 Acres of highly productive ARABLE, MEADOW, and rich FRUIT and FEEDING LAND, of the finest quality in that favoured farming district, containing Beds of excellent GRAVEL, Building and Road STONE, compact FARMS, superior FARM HOUSES, and well-arranged Farm Yards and Buildings; valuable Plots of ACCOMMODATION LAND, COTTAGES, HOMESTEADS, and excellent Gardens, with every desirable appurtenance.

Descriptive particulars and plans, setting forth the several lots in detail, and any further information required, may be obtained on application to Messrs. Frere, Cholmeley, and Foster, 28, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London; to George Brown, Esq., Cottesmore Office, Oakham; or to the Auctioneer, Evesham, and Office, Alcester.

EXTENSIVE FREEHOLD SILK THROWING AND RIBBON WEAVING MANUFACTORY,
WITH THE
MACHINERY, LOOMS, PLANT, AND OTHER FREEHOLD PROPERTY,
IN DERBY.

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,

BY Messrs. OLIVER and NEWBOLD, at the Bell Hotel, in Derby, on WEDNESDAY, the 6th October next, at Four o'clock in the afternoon, subject to conditions of sale to be then produced—all that extensive SILK THROWING and RIBBON WEAVING MILLS, DYE-HOUSES, and WAREHOUSES, with the MACHINERY and LOOMS, Two STEAM ENGINES, and all the PLANT, in working condition, together with Manager's HOUSE, Offices, and several DWELLING-HOUSES, situated in Bridge-street, Derby, and commonly known as BRIDGETT'S MILLS.

The above Premises are Freehold, and are to be sold in consequence of the death of Mr. Josiah Lewis, sole surviving Partner in the Firm of Messrs. Thomas Bridgett and Co.

The Buildings are very substantial, and have frontage to, and approaches from, three streets, and might be easily converted into separate concerns.

The Premises are built expressly for the purpose of Silk and Ribbon Manufacture, are well arranged, and the ceilings of the Ribbon and Warping Mills are all brick-arched, and are of the following dimensions, viz.:—

NEW THROWING MILL, seven storeys high, Rooms, 60ft. long, by 28ft. 3in. wide.

OLD THROWING MILL, five storeys high, 82ft. long, by 23ft. 6in. wide.

RIBBON MILL, seven storeys high, 85ft. 4in. long, by 28ft. 4in. wide.

WARPING MILL, four storeys high, 56ft. long, by 10ft. 8in. wide.

Together with excellent DYEHOUSE, fitted with Steam Boiler, Coppers, Pans, Barks, Hydro-extractor, &c.; Smith's and Fitter's Shops, range of Dye Stores, Warehouses, Counting House, Offices, capital Manager's House, open Yard, Coach-house, Stable, and other Buildings.

The PLANT and MACHINERY include two twenty-five horse power Condensing Engines, by Boulton and Watt; three Waggon Boilers, fifty Winding Frames, 4,576 spindles; thirty iron drawing Frames, 3,842 spindles; ten Doubling Frames, 773 spindles; nine Throwing Mills, 2,088 spindles; twenty-three Spinning Mills, 5,712 spindles; and twelve Machine Sewing Mills, 300 spindles.

The RIBBON MACHINERY consists of 312 Looms; twelve soft Silk Winding Frames, 1,070 spindles; Blocking and Filling Machines; also, all necessary Shafting Wheels and Gearing for working the same, Steam Piping, Cold Water and Gas Piping, Warehouse and Office Fixtures and Fittings.

Together with several FREEHOLD HOUSES and SHOPS adjoining and belonging, viz:—

An Old-licensed PUBLIC HOUSE, called "THE PHEASANT," situated in Bridge Street, occupied by William Hobson.

A HOUSE and SHOP, No. 8, Lower Brook Street, with Yard and Stabling, occupied by William Jackson.

The Old-licensed PUBLIC HOUSE, called "THE STAG AND PHEASANT," No. 7, Lower Brook Street aforesaid, occupied by William Cotton.

A HOUSE and SHOP, No. 6, Lower Brook Street, occupied by R. Walker.

A HOUSE and SHOP, No. 5, Lower Brook Street, occupied by Mr. Walkerdine.

The whole of the above will be offered in one lot.

For further particulars, application may be made to Mr. William Abell, Engineer, Brook Street Works, Derby; at the Offices of Messrs. Oliver and Newbold, Auctioneers and Estate Agents, Derby; or to Messrs. Thomas and Hollams, Solicitors, Mincing Lane, London.

BORE STREET, LICHFIELD.
CAPITAL FREEHOLD INVESTMENT.
SUBSTANTIAL RESIDENCE AND PREMISES.

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,

BY Mr. C. GILLARD, by direction of the Executrix of the late J. P. Dyott, Esq., on FRIDAY, the 8th day of October next, at the Swan Hotel, Lichfield, at Six o'clock in the evening, subject to conditions to be then declared—a substantial and well-built FREEHOLD MESSUAGE or DWELLING HOUSE, situated on the north side of Bore Street, now in the occupation of Sinckler Chinn, Esq.

The House comprises on the ground floor Entrance Hall, front Dining Room, small back Sitting Room, Kitchen, Larder, &c.; on the first floor, large front Drawing Room, two back Bed Rooms, and Water Closet; on the second floor are four good Attic Bed Rooms, and Store Rooms. There is good Cellaring, large Yard, Scullery, and convenient Offices, and a two-stalled Stable, with Loft over the same.

Also adjoining the above, for many years used as office by the late Mr. Dyott, are two Rooms on the ground floor, two Chambers on the first floor, and an attic Bed Room. There is also a good Cellar underneath, and a small Yard and Appurtenances at the rear.

The whole Premises have a frontage to Bore Street of about forty-three feet, and are well adapted to form two private Dwellings, or might be advantageously occupied together.

For further particulars, apply to Messrs. Hinckley, Brace, and Hodson, Solicitors; or to Mr. Gillard, Auctioneer, Lichfield.

J. B. HARPER & SONS, Auctioneers, Valuers, House and Estate Agency Offices, GREAT MALVERN.—These being the original Offices, *reliant* information may be obtained of Mansions, Houses, and Land to be Let or Sold.—Agents to the Lancashire Fire Office and Standard Life Office, London. 74

WHOLESALE TOBACCO TRADE.

Finest Cut, Cake, and Roll Tobacco can be obtained at SANKEY'S, 16, Suffolk Street, Birmingham. Irish Roll from 3s. 2d. Good Black, 2s. 11d. In 6 lb. quantities. Choice Cigars. Lowest Prices.

HEREFORD.
TO INNKEEPERS AND MALTSTERS.

TO be SOLD by AUCTION, at the Half Moon Inn, Hereford, on THURSDAY, the 7th day of October next, at Four o'clock in the afternoon precisely, subject to conditions of sale to be then produced:—

Lot 1.—All that Old-established INN, called "THE HALF MOON," with the Stable, Skittle Alley, and Premises thereto belonging, now in the occupation of Mr. John Bannister, together with a SHOP, COTTAGE, and other Buildings adjoining.

Lot 2.—A Newly-erected and extensive MALT-HOUSE, situated in Aubrey-street, in the rear of the Half Moon Inn, now in the occupation of Messrs. Russell.

Lot 3.—All that Newly-erected PUBLIC HOUSE and valuable PROPERTY, situate and being No. 76, Eign street, in the city of Hereford.

The Premises extend from Eign-street to Bewell Street, having respective frontages of 20ft. 6in. and 23ft. 6in., more or less, with an elaborate carved stone frontage in Eign-street. The Premises are substantially erected and well furnished, and comprise Spirit Shop, Parlour, Drawing Room, Kitchen, Bed Rooms, and very extensive Cellaring. The Party Walls on this lot are the Property of the Vendor.

For a view of all the lots, apply on the Premises.

Further particulars may be obtained of Messrs. James and Bodenham, Solicitors, Hereford.

St. Peter Street, Hereford.

NORTH WALES, near CARNARVON.

To any Gentleman seeking an Estate peculiarly adapted for the erection of a Residence, with the enjoyment of excellent Fishing and Shooting, a valuable FREEHOLD PROPERTY, known as "GLANRAFON TAWR," overlooking Carnarvon Bay, the Old Castle, and the Menai Straits, with the delightful mountain scenery in the distance, including Snowdon, Moel, Aelien, and the Rivals. The Grounds are beautifully undulating, charmingly wooded, and skirted for upwards of two miles by an excellent Salmon and Trout River. The whole is situated in the parish of Llanbiblig, distant about two miles from Carnarvon, and eight from Bangor. It comprises altogether 335 Acres, of which 250 are PASTURE, and the remainder WOODS and PLANTATIONS, and as an investment, or to an admirer of picturesque scenery, it is unusually attractive. The FISHING and SPORTING which this Property affords are unexceptionably good. About a mile from Glanrafon is a compact FARM, known as "PEN-Y-BRYN," situated in the parish of Llanwnda, and comprising a DWELLING HOUSE, Farm Buildings, and 100 Acres of ARABLE and PASTURE LAND, which would form a desirable addition if more Land be required.

MESSRS. BEADEL are instructed to SELL by AUCTION, at the Mart, Tokenhouse Yard, London, in October, the above valuable PROPERTIES, particulars of which, when ready, may be obtained of Messrs. Kingsford and Dorman, 23, Essex-street, Strand; at the Mart; and of Messrs. Beadel, 25, Gresham-street, London, E.C.

LANCASHIRE INSURANCE COMPANY,
With which is now united the
BIRMINGHAM FIRE OFFICE.

The Directors invite attention to the Financial position of the Lancashire Insurance Company, as disclosed in the printed Balance-sheet to 31st December, 1868.

CAPITAL.

The Subscribed Capital amounts to £1,461,400., of which one-tenth has been actually paid up by a numerous and wealthy body of merchants and manufacturers, resident chiefly in Manchester, London, Liverpool, and Glasgow. The Paid-up Capital is, therefore, £146,400.

INCOME.

The Income during 1868 was as under :—

Fire Premiums	£112,579
Life Premiums	39,527
Interest on Investments	16,635
Total	£168,741

LIFE RESERVE FUND.

The Life Reserve Fund on 31st December, 1868, amounted to £169,330.

The Directors, by every means in their power, accompanied with the strictest economy in the management, have husbanded this fund with the greatest care, as is evidenced by the amount of the fund at the close of each of the last five years, viz.:—

1864	£105,079
1865	115,328
1866	133,679
1867	150,970
1868	169,330

INVESTED FUNDS.

The Total Funds of the Company on 31st December, 1868, amounted to £396,834.

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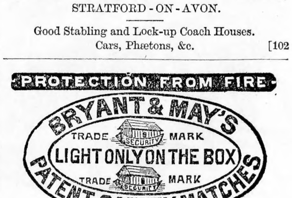

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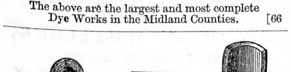

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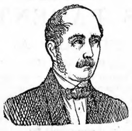

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THE CAMP AT WIMBLEDON, 1869.

Extract of Medical Report on the Wimbledon Meeting.

The general health of the camp has been unprecedentally satisfactory, and bears a remarkably favourable comparison with the results of last year, when the admissions for diseases supposed to be incidental to camp life were more numerous on one single day than they have been this year throughout the whole meeting.

The sanitary arrangements of the camp have been very rigidly supervised, and I am still of opinion that the earth-closet system has again proved most successful; and that it is the only efficient and reliable method, when properly carried out; the severe test to which, during the two past meetings it has been subjected affords, I venture to think, a tolerably fair ground for deduction.

JOHN WYATT, Surgeon-Major, and
Surgeon to the National Rifle Association.

From the Times, July 17.

The Earth Closet system was tried again this year, and with the most satisfactory results. Had there been a failure anywhere, it must have been felt yesterday, when the temperature was by far the highest of any day during the present meeting.

From the Daily News. July 10.

The health of the Camp is marvellously good. Out of the 2,530 men whom the Association have in their books—of whom, be it said, but 1,277 are volunteers—there are but four cases of diarrhœa, and but 17 men on the doctor's books at all. None of these are serious cases, and the admirable working of the Earth Closets, concerning which Captain Drake reported so favourably last year, is again of the highest service. Thanks to them, none of the inconveniences and dangers arising from suddenly transporting a large body of men to live and sleep in an open country can occur, and the effect is shown by the smallness of the doctor's list.

From the Pall Mall Gazette, July 19.

The latrinal arrangements have again been most satisfactory.

From the British Medical Journal, July 17.

The health of the Camp this year has hitherto been excellent. A few cases of diarrhœa, an occasional case of slight exhaustion from fatigue, exposure to the sun, or perhaps the little follies of the previous day, have been about all to engage the attention of the surgeons in camp. The cool mornings and evenings, and the refreshing breeze which has almost daily blown across the Common, have no doubt contributed much to the satisfactory bill of health; but the improved water-supply, the more effective Earth Closets, the greater and more varied hygienic precautions taken by the Volunteers, and the general improvement in the sanitary arrangements of the Camp, have every reason to claim a favourable hearing.

From the Observer, July 25.

It is gratifying to state that the medical statistics of the Camp show a less amount of sickness than was ever previously known, there being but a few, and those very unimportant, cases of diarrhœa brought under notice of the medical staff at any time during the fortnight. This favourable circumstance is attributable to the adoption of the Dry Earth system, which, even on the very hottest days with which the Camp was visited, prevented the emission of unpleasant odours.

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